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Paul Finch

2030 - THE SIXTH THOUSANDTH
YEAR

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To the Memory of Dr. Herman L. Hoeh
1928-2004

Mentor, Teacher, Friend

PREFACE

The school of Eliyahu taught: Six thousand years is the duration of the world. Two thousand of the six thousand years are characterized by chaos; two thousand years are characterized by Torah, from the era of the Patriarchs until the end of the mishnaic period; and two thousand years are the period of the coming of the Messiah.

Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 97a-b; Abodah Zarah 9a.

And even in the beginning of the creation he makes mention of the sabbath. “And God made in six days the works of his hands; and he finished them on the seventh day, and he rested the seventh day, and sanctified it” (Gen 2:2).

Consider, my children, what that signifies, he finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this; that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end. For with him one day is a thousand years; as himself testifieth, saying. Behold this day shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, Children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished.

Epistle of Barnabas 13:3-5

*For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded ... This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed; it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the **six thousandth year**.*

Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 5, 28.3.

I **T** IS THE INTENTION OF THIS BOOK TO MAKE A DISTINCT STATEMENT concerning the history of this world. This planet is unique in the universe and the human experience upon it is undeniably one of the greatest mysteries of the entire cosmos. We who are alive today need to reflect upon where we have come from and where we are going.

Today, in this modern technological world, many have had questions that have not been satisfied as far as “where did we come from” and “why are we here?” It is not the intention of this author to be able to answer those myriads of questions here. But we do know that the Bible alone claims the authority for those answers. It dogmatically and unabashedly proclaims that we humans

are the product of, not mindless happenstance, but of an intellect that is far greater than we physical humans can comprehend.

Yet, modern science, which can only deal in the physical realities that it is left to investigate, is helpless in trying to explain what it cannot understand. Yet, how could life, intelligence, mathematics, science, beauty, indeed, matter itself, come out of nothing? These are questions that have plagued human beings from time immemorial. And we are all aware that evolutionary theories do not have the answers to these big questions, nor can they ever have them.

It is not necessary to debate the question of evolution here. However, one of the supports for the evolutionary theory is that history alone goes back further than the six thousand years that is allotted to that is stated in the Biblical revelation. Indeed, this Biblical contradiction represents no less than a serious threat to the veracity of the Biblical revelation itself. What we need to examine here in this treatise is whether historians are correct or have they incorrectly interpreted the historical evidence.

The Bible unapologetically tells us that human activity was indeed created and that human-kind has only existed for six thousand years. It does not say that the earth is only six thousand years old, which anyone with any sense of intelligent observation can easily deduce. But it does tell us that the family of Adam — the Homo Sapiens of science — has in fact only existed for a mere six thousand years.

Is that true? Has human experience on this planet only been a mere six thousand years? What about fossils of skeletons of Australopithecus found in Africa? Do not they support the fact that human existence goes back far beyond a six thousand year history? The answer is simple. Those pre-human skeletal types were pre-Adamic. They may be referred to as proto-Man, or experimental developments of humans, but they were not humanoids in the modern sense at all. They were mammals on the same level as animals of today.

What they lacked is the human spirit that was imparted to Adam at his creation (Gen 2:7). Therefore, human beings represent a unique species among all other life forms on earth. Humans can think, reason, invent, create, achieve remarkable feats of art and physical accomplishments, even reach the moon. There is no way that humans could have achieved any of this in a mere six thousand years unless we have been given god-like qualities that no other creature on this planet possesses. The stark reality of this fact confounds the rationalistic theories of those who refuse to admit anything other than the plain facts of this reality.

The footsteps of the earliest civilizations all come from the Fertile Crescent (not Africa nor Asia). Even many scholars recognize that the Sumerians were the first civilization that began in the Levant.¹ Yet, what scholars do not know is how to correctly date the ancient king lists that have come down to us. In order for them to discredit the testimony of the Bible, it was essential for them to make it appear that the earliest civilizations predated that of the Bible — in some cases by thousands of years. This was not a hard task. They simply stacked end-to-end all the dynasties of the most ancient nations back as far as they could, especially Egypt, then used that model to date all the other middle eastern civilizations within that context.

¹ Samuel Noah Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer: Thirty-nine Firsts in Recorded History*, 3rd rev. ed. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).

The weakest link in that chain was the fact that it has been discovered that the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt was dated some 600 years too early.² So how did scholars treat this information? With resentful acrimony, to be sure. They refused to believe the evidence. Yet, the evidence was unassailable. Indeed, Velikovsky started an entire movement by many in the academic community that is alive to this day who were convinced of the correctness of his original thesis on the reconstruction of ancient chronology.³ But most mainstream scholars refused to treat the evidence presented with a fair appraisal. So, what could they do to defeat it?

What scholars did was to say that Egyptian chronology was supported by all the other chronologies of the ancient Near Eastern cultures. But that ruse can be seen for what it is. Why? Because all the other chronologies that have been reconstructed by modern scholars were in turn built upon the false chronology of Egypt. In other words, in what constitutes the biggest circular reasoning argument of all time, scholars boldly carried on with this diversion hoping that no one would notice.

Thus, it was no longer a matter of scholars misinterpreting the evidence and correcting their positions when confronted with it. Now it became a matter where scholars dug in their heels and countered the evidence with the notion that you cannot change Egyptian chronology because it is secured by the chronologies of other nations that were in turn constructed based on Egyptian chronology. Does that make sense? It is high time that this circular reasoning be exposed for what it is!

One of the greatest Egyptologists of the modern era was Sir Alan Gardiner. After all his research, he finally concluded:

It must never be forgotten that we are dealing with a civilization thousands of years old and one of the which only tiny remnants have survived. What is proudly advertised as Egyptian history is merely a collection of rags and tatters.⁴

I don't think that Professor Gardiner's colleagues have taken kindly to such a sentiment. Today, Egyptologists believe that they have pretty much figured out ancient Egyptian history just fine, thank you, and don't need any embarrassing criticism such as that.

Of course, this nonsensical circular reasoning cannot be sustained, except possibly for one synchronism. And that synchronism is with the Assyrian king Assurballit I (conventionally dated 1365 and 1330 BCE) who corresponded in the Amarna Letters with Amenhotep III (1388-1350 BCE) and Akhenaten (1351-1334 BCE).⁵ Scholars feel confident that Assyrian chronology is unassailable due to their king lists that are founded upon astronomical evidence — a solar eclipse dated to the year 763 BCE, and were faithfully handed down to us today.

Thus, if the restored chronology is to be sustained, there must be a logical explanation for this major objection. Velikovsky himself realized the problem, but his solution never gained acceptance, mainly due to the fact that it was an artificial explanation concerning the use of different names.⁶ We will confront this objection head-on and finally put this matter to rest. Indeed, this

² Immanuel Velikovsky, "Theses for the Reconstruction of Ancient History: From the End of the Middle Kingdom in Egypt to the Advent of Alexander the Great." *Scripta Universitatis Atque Bibliothecae Hierosolymitanarum, Scientific Report III*. (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1945).

³ For the most comprehensive information addressing Velikovsky's theses, see the information provided by the *Society for Interdisciplinary Studies*, online at <http://www.sis-group.org.uk/>.

⁴ Sir Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), 53.

⁵ Edward F. Campbell, Jr., *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters: With Special Reference to the Hypothetical Coregency of Amenophis III and Akhenaten* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1963).

⁶ Velikovsky, "Assurballit," *Kronos* 12:3 (Spring 1988): 3-13. See also online at <http://www.varchive.org/> (accessed Nov 4, 2021).

may be one of the greatest contributions to the entire problem of resolving the chronology of the ancient Near East.⁷

Why Chronology is Important

What we must realize is that the Bible contains very much chronological information. Why? Was it put there for a purpose? Was it given to us so that we could know the truth of history? Indeed, was it given to us so that we could understand the truth of prophecy? One thing is certain to this researcher, at least. Chronology is probably the number one subjects of the entire Bible. Unless we get the chronology right, then we can't get the history right. And so much of history is false due to a false understanding of chronology. From this writer's point of view, no subject is more important than chronology. It is for this reason that we must get it right once and for all, especially in these last days of a six thousand year history of the family of Adam.

But, is it possible for us to determine whether this information is historically true or false? One does not need to be religiously indoctrinated to look at the historical evidence and compare it with the testimony of the Bible, archaeology, and classical history. All one needs is an open mind when evaluating the Biblical statements with that of the historical testimony. And when one does that, it is an amazing fact that the Bible has indeed reliable historical information that challenges the very foundations of modern historical theory to the point that it must now be re-evaluated in the light of that witness.

Of course, modern historians have no intention of engaging in such a debate. Therefore, it is not to them that this book is intended, but for those who have no ax to grind and wish to honestly look at the facts. And when one does, it becomes obvious that not only is the Bible correct in its history, but that in many cases modern historians have engaged in a deliberate cover-up of the facts.

This book intends to pull no punches in exposing some of the most egregious subterfuges that scholars have engaged in, in order to sustain their false chronologies. This book is based upon the premise that the chronology of the Bible is the non-negotiable starting point of all discussions concerning world history — especially that of ancient Israel. Thus, all other chronologies must align themselves with that testimony — not the other way around.

Scholars ridicule those who question the standard chronology of ancient history as chronological revisionists. It is not Velikovsky, nor those who hold to the truth of his overall thesis that are the chronological revisionists. It is modern scholars themselves who are the true revisionists of ancient chronology. It is they who have reconstructed ancient chronology to bolster their evolutionary theories of how human civilization arose.

Thus, this book is to be considered — not a revision of ancient chronology — but a restoration of ancient chronology. It is therefore offered up as a challenge to the modern accepted thought concerning the history of mankind on this planet, hardened, pre-conceived theories of modern, dug-in scholarship to the contrary. Only those with an open mind to ideas denied in academia can explore a refreshing view of history that itself challenges the status quo. Let the reader decide if this book does not hold true to that promise.

⁷ Much of the credit for correctly placing Assyrian chronology is due to the insightful work of Herman L. Hoeh, *Compendium of World History* (Pasadena: Ambassador College Press, 1963), 1:293-320.

Calendar Problems

For dates given in this work concerning Babylonian or other secular sources from 626 BCE to 75 CE, it is customary to use the reconstructed Babylonian Calendar developed by Parker and Dubberstein.⁸ But should we use those dates for dates given in the Biblical Text for ancient Israel?

For instance, in the year 598 BCE the Babylonians inserted a second Ululu (Heb. Elul), whereas in the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar that is used in this study, that Jewish Calendar year had two months called Adar. This means that the two calendars were at odds with each other for a period off by a whole month from the six-month period of Elul to Nisan, where they then realign themselves.

The Parker and Dubberstein Babylonian calendar cannot in any way be used to establish dates in ancient Judah. The Levitical priesthood would never have had a calendar that would have inserted a second Elul during the seven-month Holyday season from Nisan to Tishri. In such a year the month Tishri would end up as the eighth month after Nisan, rather than the seventh month. That would then violate the proscriptions of Leviticus 23. In the Levitical calendar, it was permissible to add an adjustment month just before Nisan (a second Adar) which would be outside of the seven months of the Holyday season. But no adjustments could ever occur within that Holyday season itself, which is what the Babylonian calendar violates.

For example, on the Hebrew Calendar for the year of 597 BCE, the second day of Adar could either be February 14, 597 BCE (Adar I) or March 16, 597 BCE (Adar II). This is a serious problem that no one ever seems to address.

So, it is reasonable to accept dates given in the Babylonian Chronicles as being what Parker and Dubberstein have reconstructed. But such a calendar cannot be accepted for dates given in the Bible? Therefore, throughout this study when dates are given with Hebrew names, then they will follow the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar established by this author for this study. And when Babylonian names are given, they will follow the reconstructed dates given by Parker and Dubberstein.

A Note about Sources

The chronology presented herein was developed by the author. In some cases, it agrees with the chronologies of others which has already been published. The author has tried to meticulously document and give acknowledgments to the works of others as much as possible, except for facts that are common knowledge. If, however, some statements have inadvertently included herein material that others feel has been an infringement of their own intellectual property, such a coincidence is completely accidental. The author has no intention of plagiarizing the works of other researchers.

A work such as this one can only review so much material, and a single author cannot be responsible for reviewing every piece of literature in the world that pertains to this subject.

This book represents the honest research of the author in the hope of promoting a common knowledge of facts that should be considered the property of all students of history. It is with this in mind that this book is dedicated.

⁸ Richard A. Parker and Waldo H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.- A.D. 75*. (Providence: Brown University Press, 1956).

A Reflection about Dr. Hoeh

This work is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Herman L. Hoeh, whose doctoral thesis, *Compendium of World History* (2 volumes), has definitely had a profound effect on the author's thinking for over a half-century now.

However, it should be noted that a decade after Dr. Hoeh composed his monumental tome, he ended up rejecting its overall premise — specifically the Velikovskian model of Egyptian history. In a sermon that he gave at the Feast of Tabernacles in Pasadena, California, in 1977, he detailed his position regarding that change in his thinking. It has always troubled me as to why he reversed his thinking on this matter and I still wonder if he really did change his mind, or was pressured to do so for college education reasons.

From my perspective, I believe that he was coerced by circumstances to make these changes. First of all, Dr. Hoeh was not only an evangelist in the Worldwide Church of God in Pasadena, California, but he was also a professor of History at Ambassador College. In the early years, the Church believed in a chronology that placed the 6000th year in 1975. It was also the belief that the Church would flee to Petra three and a half years earlier, *i.e.*, 1972. However, when 1972 came and went, many within the Church, including the ministry, began to question the validity of the teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong and his prophetic calling.

1974 was a crucial year in the World Wide Church of God. The Church began to split over doctrinal issues. In the Fall of 1974, I had the distinct privilege of going to Pasadena, California, to attend the Feast of Tabernacles there, and meeting with Dr. Hoeh personally. He invited me and my family to his home, and later we had dinner at his favorite Turkish restaurant in Pasadena. It was evident then to me that Dr. Hoeh was already beginning to change his mind on a number of things.

Also, during this time, Ambassador College was seeking accreditation. One stumbling block was in the area of ancient history. It is my belief that Dr. Hoeh was forced to change his mind due to these political pressures that were brought about by the faculty that needed to abandon a position that did not conform with modern academia's standards.

By the year 1977, Dr. Hoeh formally rejected his own thesis in a sermon delivered on the Great Last Day of the Feast of Tabernacles, in Pasadena, California. I was shocked. In fact, I wrote to Dr. Hoeh and told him that the proof that Dr. Velikovsky presented for the identity of Shishak as being Thutmose III was too overwhelming for me to abandon. Dr. Hoeh replied that the eclipse of 763 BCE firmly establishes Assyrian chronology and must be accepted. He also was convinced that C¹⁴ dating could no longer be challenged, due to the corrections of the Bristlecone Pine calibrations.

In the years subsequent, I remained steadfast in my original beliefs. Nevertheless, I continued studying further to see whether in fact Velikovsky's thesis could be wrong. My research only reaffirmed my initial beliefs. However, my own independent research has come to some different conclusions than what Dr. Hoeh had originally proposed, so this work has new information that has never been published before.

First of all, Dr. Hoeh made two significant mistakes concerning Biblical chronology. He accepted Archbishop Ussher's belief that Abraham was born in his father's 130th year, instead of his 70th year. This introduced a 60-year period that should not have been included. And second, he placed the death of Solomon in the year of 972 BCE, which was five years short of the true date of 977 BCE. Thus, when you subtract that five-year period from the 60-year period he introduced, we

end up with the fact that his overall chronology was off by 55 years. Once that correction is made, then it is apparent that the 6000th year of Adam was not 1975, but in fact 2030 (1975 + 55=2030).

It should be rightfully asked, what would Dr. Hoeh think of a book dedicated to him, but is not in line with later changed position? Isn't the ingenuous? What would Dr. Hoeh himself think of such a dedication? In fact, he might even be angered over the fact that it is herein suggested his original views never changed.

To this, I can only say that I regret this disparity. But from my perspective Dr. Hoeh made his mark with his original thesis. He never would have made any significant contribution in Biblical chronology by falling in line with the legion of obsequious myrmidons who have prostrated themselves to the secular nonsense that is in dire opposition to the chronology of the Biblical record.

I wish Dr. Hoeh was still around to read this book (especially volume 2). Would it have changed his mind? I don't know. But there must be a reason that I have held onto the original thesis of Dr. for so long. Maybe it was meant to be in these last days re looked at with fresh evidence. And that is exactly what I am doing.⁹

Should This Book be a Part of School Curriculum?

No! Certainly this author would like nothing better than to spread "the word" as it were, but I believe that the job of our schools is to teach the basics of "read'n, 'right'n, and 'rithmetic," as well as give students a sense of exploration to discover for themselves the mysteries of our past. Our present school system is certainly predicated on the basis of evolutionary thought, and so be it. Since this book deals with the historical writings of the "Bible," then it is considered by academia to be a religious book and therefore has no place in our schools, even though the writer is not a part of any religious organization and is not trying to promote the theological beliefs of any religious entity.

We live in a secular society and as such we are still a part of the six thousand years of history which will soon experience a milestone that many in the past have foreseen as the culmination of an epoch that is soon to expire. How history will unfold in the next few years remains to be seen. It is the purpose of this book not to predict the future, but to expose the reader to the views of the present writer concerning our past. Since this incorporates not only physical evidence but a bit of inspiration in order to comprehend what our school systems can never teach, it should be left to the discretion of the individual — not institutions to seek out what schools will never teach.

⁹ It should be noted that the chronology that is presented in this book is strictly that of the author's and does not follow Dr. Hoeh's in a number of significant details — the main one being his date of Adam's 2024 BCE, whereas this author's date is 3971 BCE.

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INTRODUCTION

Therefore the effort to arrive at the Truth, and especially the truth about the gods, is a longing for the divine. For the search for truth requires for its study and investigation the consideration of sacred subjects, and it is a work more hollowed than any form of holy living or temple service.

Plutarch, Moralia, De Iside et Osiride, V:352

There are after all some slight and obscure traces of true history here and there to be found, as they lie scattered up and down in the ancient writings of Egypt. But it requires a person of uncommon address to find them out; one, who can deduce great truths from scanty premises.

Plutarch, Erotica, 762¹⁰

THOSE OF YOU WHO HOLD IN YOUR HANDS THIS BOOK WILL BEGIN THE MOST enlightening journey into ancient mysteries of historical chronology than what you have ever embarked upon before. If this sounds like a bold statement, this author believes that what you will find in the pages of this book are explanations that in many cases have never before been advanced.

The great enigmas of ancient history will be resolved that have eluded chronologists and historians for centuries. It is time to put away all the other histories of the past. They are all now obsolete and must be discarded. Nevertheless, this book was not written to try to convince scholars that they are wrong. What scholars believe is totally irrelevant to our renewed investigation.

This book was written for those who possess fresh and open minds so that they can draw their own conclusions based upon the evidence presented. I have made great attempts to quote the positions of other historians and chronologists so that a new generation can see the errors of past attempts at coming to a true Biblical chronology.

It is only fitting that not only is there an alternative viewpoint presented in the stalemate of Biblical chronology, but it is important to point out that many of the chronologists of the past have not been honest with the data that they were interpreting. Many of these people had either a theological agenda to promote, or they wanted to somehow adjust the Biblical figures to comply with modern historians' reconstruction of the chronology of Egypt and Assyria.

¹⁰ Quoted from Jacob Bryant, *A New System; Or, An Analysis of Antient Mythology* (London: Printed for J. Walker, etc., 1807), 5:401.

The Purpose of this Book

Our task is simple. It is to rely on what the Biblical narrative says, and then interpret secular history in the light of that account — not, as is usually done, the other way around!

The chronology of this book has been developed by the author. In some cases, it agrees with other developed chronologies. However, such coincidences are completely independent of such other works. Any coincidental similarities reflect on the fact that the evidence has lead others to the same conclusion, and nothing more.

The reader will be provided with this evidence that has helped formulate the overall chronology presented herein. An unbiased reader will have to judge this evidence and make their own decision as to what should be their own conclusion.

It is to the inquiring minds — certainly to the young students of history — that this book is dedicated. This book is a mind-expanding experience. This book will finally make sense out of history. This book is intended to renew a spirit of Biblical studies in chronology as never before. It is a book that treats the canonical literature with respect, rather than with disdain. With this said, it is now time to embark on this new historical study that will literally shake the foundations of established thought on ancient chronology. Let now this thrilling journey begin.

CHAPTER 1

BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY OVERVIEW

I IS TIME TO REWRITE ANCIENT HISTORY! THE CHRONOLOGY OF ANCIENT HISTORY AS presented by modern secular scholarship is totally and emphatically bogus! This boastful claim is the result of over half a century of dedicated research. The entire subject of Biblical chronology, as well as all of ancient world chronology, is herein challenged as never before. And it is further the conclusion by this author that all Biblical chronologists, no matter how sincere and dedicated to the Scriptures they have sought to be, nevertheless, have also failed to get the matter correct. That unfortunate circumstance is finally over!

It should first be noted that this chronological study aligns itself with the overall chronology of the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible. And it is the position of this author that it is time to stop allowing modern scholars take over the history of the Bible, as well as the entire world, based upon their absurd ideas of the chronology of Egypt. The purpose of this book is to finally establish a true chronology of the Bible that must withstand the false chronologies of the ancient world set forth by modern scholars. The reader of this book now holds in their hands the very means to discover the truth of this assertion and then come to the conclusion that the evidence presented herein cannot in any way be overthrown.¹¹

Here is what we must be challenged to re-investigate. It is finally time that serious modern students of ancient history and Biblical history consider that the Bible itself is a serious historical

¹¹ Again, it must be stated up front that this thesis is an independent research that is not a part of any religious organization, nor any secular agenda. There is no intention of trying to push any particular theological belief of any group, religious theology, secular ideas, nor personal philosophies. The true chronological revisionists are not those who intend to restore the chronology of Scripture and the world. It is modern scholars that are the true chronological revisionists. This work restores Biblical chronology based on Biblical, historical, and archaeological evidence that secular scholars refuse to admit. And as far as modern Rabbinical Judaism is concerned, their chronology in the end was a deliberate fabrication designed to make it look like Jesus was centuries too early for the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel 9 to apply to him. However, the *Seder Olam* chronology, which is the dating system of the modern Hebrew Calendar, whose Persian and Greek periods are so provably wrong due to anti-Christian bias, must also be rejected as a total denial of plain historical facts.

Biblical Chronology Overview

document — even though modern secular scholars refuse to admit such a fact. However, this book staunchly takes the approach that it is the chronology of the Bible that puts not only Biblical history in its true light, as well as that of the history of ancient nations.

This present researcher has looked into the secular sources and has determined that modern scholars have allowed themselves to swallow the fudged histories that have been handed down to us by Manetho and Berossos, and even fudged ancient king lists of Egypt and Assyria. Many of those ancient sources were deliberately exaggerated to make the history of their nations appear to be the oldest. So, they simply stacked dynasties on top of dynasties and modern scholars willingly swallowed that scenario hook line and sinker. Then those false Egyptian chronologies were used to make Biblical history the fairy tale, and not the other way around.

Modern History Is Evolutionary Driven

Note also, and this is especially important, that modern scholarship is evolutionary driven. So all those “Stone Age Cultures” that existed before Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, *etc.*, according to their way of thinking, must have gradually developed into a later, fully developed Homosapien society — *viz.*, modern man — a culture that took untold thousands of years to develop. But it didn’t develop over thousands of years. It developed figuratively overnight, which is the obvious truth of history.

Yes, of course, we all must admit that the evidence is that this planet is very ancient. Only a fool would deny the evidence of that fact. Also, the skeletal remains of pre-Adamic creatures resembling modern humans do not prove evolution. Those proto-humans did not have the God-breathed human spirit:

Then the LORD God formed Adam from the dust of the Adamah (ground). And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being (soul)¹² (Gen 2:7).

Animals have no soul. Pre-humans had no soul. Adam and his descendants do. The chronology of the Bible is the history of Adam and his descendants. That 6000 years is nearly over. Indeed, the very book that you the reader now holds in your hands is finally the breakthrough research that will give the reader the tools to decide for themselves concerning this fact.¹³

The Reliability of Ancient Sources

We also must come to the realization that the history of the ancient world has been falsified in many cases by ancient sources themselves. The problem, therefore, is to analyze the data of these sources in the light of the data provided in the various Biblical texts handed down to us and archaeological evidence.

To be sure, modern historians welcomed the long, end-to-end, stacked-upon-each-other king lists because it supposedly proved that nations like Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon predated the Biblical narrative. Thus, in order to justify their biased evolutionary theory, it was necessary for them to make ancient kingdoms extend as far back into the past as possible, far beyond the Biblical

¹² So NRSV, footnote *f* or KJV: “living soul”.

¹³ It is the personal belief of this author that the family of Adam were given six millennial days to go its way before God would intervene and then would follow a millennial day of the Messiah. That is as far as this author is going with such a belief in this work.

dates. By so doing then they could pre-date the Bible, and therefore be free to make up any version of history that they wished to believe in.

So, which nation would end up being the star witness for this attack on Scripture? Alas, it was deemed to be ancient Egypt. And how did that happen? It happened based upon false reconstructions of an ancient historian by the name of Manetho, who stacked all the Egyptian dynasties as if one dynasty followed the next in his sequence of 30 dynasties. That was a lie, of course, but modern scholars needed that lie in order to prove their version of ancient history. But where evidence of parallel dynasties occurred, it was squelched in order to sustain the inflated reconstruction of history.

Now with this book as your guide, the reader has the means of evaluating new evidence that has been for so long suppressed down through the centuries. It is time that honest truth researchers see this evidence that is laid up on the table of truth and then draw their own conclusions — despite strong opposition from modern scholarship to the contrary.

Modern students who are being taught by the institutions of higher learning are at a disadvantage for obvious reasons. They simply cannot get a degree from these institutions unless they obsequiously kiss the ring of their teachers. Fine! Do what you must do to get your degree, and then go out and independently make a difference by challenging the nonsense that has been peddled by anti-Biblical scholars for so long. This author is under no obligation to be bridled by any such limitations. It is time that a new generation of scholarship stands up and reviews the evidence presented herein and then decides to take up the challenges brought forth in this monumental research.

It is with this in mind that we must give a new treatment to the study of Biblical chronology. This study has found that the theories of modern scholarship (secular, Christian, Jewish, *etc.*) have been weighed in the balance and have been found sorely wanting. It is with this advantage that we can fearlessly stride forward in our pursuit of how Biblical history and secular history unite to tell us the really amazing story of our past that has been hidden for so long.

A Note about Sources

The main sources that will be used to reconstruct Biblical chronology in this study is, of course, the Bible itself, using primarily the Masoretic text. Other sources cited herein do not alter the overall chronology of the Bible; they in many cases supplement the Biblical information with additional evidence not recorded in the Bible. Thus, a review of these sources is here reviewed:

1. The Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible. The chronological data of this standard tradition is superior to that of the Septuagint tradition and agrees with the other external sources (such as Josephus, the *Seder Olam*, the *Book of Jasher*, *etc.*). However, having said that, it appears that the older text that Josephus used has reported some differences that will be seen to correct some chronological problems in the MT with respect to the kings of Israel. This should not be seen as a criticism of the MT, but rather as divine providence of the original truth that only this work has preserved. Therefore, with only a few chronological exceptions which will be discussed as we move along, there is no further necessity to spend time here to explain why it is the main source of Biblical chronology in this work.

2. Flavius Josephus. (*ca.* 37-100 CE). Josephus is most valuable because he uses a text of the Hebrew Scriptures that must be older than the Masoretic Text, since in some cases, as will be seen, he even corrects some of the chronological inaccuracies found by this author that have later crept into the MT.¹⁴ The Whiston translation of Josephus will be the one used in this book.¹⁵

Biblical Chronology Overview

3. **Seder Olam Rabba.** The *Seder Olam* (lit., “Order of the World”) is considered to have been compiled around 160 CE by a Rabbi Yosi ben Halaftha. So esteemed was its dating system by the later Jewish community that its chronology eventually became the basis for the dating system of the present Hebrew Calendar. The edition cited herein will be that of Heinrich W. Guggenheimer.¹⁶

4. **The Book of Jasher.** The *Book of Jasher* (lit., “The Upright Book”), has borrowed the same name as the Biblical source cited in Joshua 10:13 and 2 Sam 1:18, but is in no way that same ancient source. Of course, scholarly works would never cite this work as an authoritative source. Nevertheless, it appears to be a Jewish Midrash written in Rabbinic Hebrew that agrees with other Jewish sources of the time, including many traditions in the *Talmud* and the *Seder Olam*, and carries the same (no longer extent) Jewish traditions that the Apostle Paul cited in 2 Timothy 3:8 and Jude 14. Only a few instances in this work are out of sync with the MT; so if this work is to be considered a fraud, it is certainly a good one. It is for this reason that the chronological references of this source are included in this work for at least comparison reasons. The Wayne Simpson edition will be cited herein, except where noted.¹⁷

5. **The Book of Jubilees.** This is a book that is reported to have been written around the Maccabean era, ca. 160 BCE. It also has interesting chronological data that the *Book of Genesis* does not include. This work will be following the edition of Professor Robert Charles.¹⁸

6. **Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs.** This is a pseudepigrapha work supposedly comprising the last words of the sons of Jacob. It supplements the Genesis account with chronological information that helps us fill in the gaps not reported in the Bible. It will be cited using the R. H. Charles translation.¹⁹

7. **Eusebius.** Eusebius and other important classical writers will be cited as we move along.

8. **The “Canon of Ptolemy.”** This “Canon” stands as the most pre-eminent chronological work of all time for the history of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Roman times. It goes beyond the chronological statements in the Bible. Rest assured, an entire section of this work will be devoted to the validity of this essential source.

9. **Archaeological Sources.** But of course. However, the reader must understand that it is the interpretation of this evidence that is where, in many cases, are used to draw false conclusions. This too will be brought out as we move along.

It is now time to begin our thrilling journey for the true chronology of the Bible and ancient history. Our grand quest begins now.

¹⁴ I know that this is a bold statement to many Biblical purists, and especially so among the members of the Jewish community. Nevertheless, it will be shown to be the case in certain numerical errors in the chronology of the kings of Israel, as will be brought out when we discuss the chronology of that period. This is why that we can be thankful for the earlier Hebrew text that Josephus employed because it corrects those errors and brings everything back on track. And, thus, the divine miracle of the sanctity of the original text is finally for the first time brought out in this volume.

¹⁵ *The Works of Flavius Josephus, Complete and Unabridged*, trans. William Whiston (Belfast: Simms & McIntyre, 1841, repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1987).

¹⁶ *Seder Olam: The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology*, tr. with commentary by Heinrich W. Guggenheimer (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005).

¹⁷ Wayne Simpson, *The Authentic Annals of the Early Hebrews: Also known as the Book of Jasher* (Kearney, Nebr.: Morris Publishing, 1995). Modern scholars put no credence to this source, but then, they put no credence to the Bible itself.

¹⁸ Robert H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 2:1-82.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2

ESTABLISHING THE EXACT PERIOD FROM ADAM TO THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

*I*N MODERN TIMES THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WAS CLASSICALLY OUTLINED by the Reverend Archbishop James Ussher back in the year 1650 of the common era.²⁰ With few exceptions, his monumental work represented the most honorable attempt at presenting the chronology from the Biblical texts to date.²¹ His brilliant thesis has stood the test of time, but, unfortunately, it has been determined by the present author that he constructed a chronology that was made to make the creation of Adam a four thousand period to the birth of Jesus. In so doing he had to purposely manipulate the data to make it come out so. It is therefore our task herein to analyze where he went wrong and finally restore Biblical chronology to an authentic reality. Only once that is done can we also restore ancient history to be in alignment with that overall chronological construct.

It should also be noted that within the Jewish community, it too has concocted a chronology that has been guilty of chronological manipulation. In the second century of the common era, the rabbis were concerned that the prophecy of Daniel 9 about the coming of the Messiah should not culminate in the time of Jesus, so they deliberately came up with a chronology that pointed away from the time of Jesus, even though no Jewish Messiah came when Daniel predicted he would come.

²⁰ Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656), *Annales Veterus Testamenti* (London: J. Flesher, 1650). Revised edition, *Annals of the World*, ed. Larry and Marion Pierce (Green Forest, Ark.: Master Books, Inc., 2007).

²¹ The main criticism of Archbishop Ussher's work is that he was obviously attempting to establish a premise that Jesus (accordingly, the second Adam) was born in 4 BCE, which in his thesis was exactly 4000 years after the creation of the first Adam, supposedly in 4004 BCE. Unfortunately, however, in so doing, he was forced to manipulate the interpretation of some texts in Genesis in order to make his conjecture comply with his own predisposition (see in fact Ussher, *Annals*, 779). Also, this would have made the 6000th year 1997. Nothing, of course, of any significance happened then, so this study is justified at re-investigating the entire subject all over again.

The Quest for a True Biblical Chronology

The quest for a coherent and accurate Biblical chronology has been the endeavor of a legion of studies from time immemorial. It is amazing in one respect how many different conclusions have been derived from the same data. Obviously, there has been a difference of opinion in the interpretation of the many supporting texts involved.

Many interpreters have been guilty of simply making false assumptions. Others have adopted these false assumptions because they seemed to be correct to them. Nevertheless, the chronology presented herein finally corrects the error of the traditional chronology of the Bible and that of Archbishop James Ussher, and others.

This book finally corrects all other proposed Biblical chronologies (as well as the modern reconstructed histories of ancient nations) advanced by every Biblical chronologist to date! Does that sound like a pretentious and bold assertion? Well, if the reader (including many authors of their own proposed chronologies) believe that this author is wrong, then they must at least admit that this author has done his homework and the conclusions of this author's research are just as valid as anyone else's, based upon the evidence that will be presented herein. This author will finally present new evidence that the readers of this book must now reconsider in order to understand where many have failed in the past.

The problem of resolving the chronology of the Bible should have never been that difficult if we approach the subject with a new sense of honesty of what the data actually says, and what it does not say. All one must do is to simply take the Biblical numbers as given in the Masoretic Text²² and add them up from the Creation of Adam until the time that the Jewish Temple was destroyed in the last year of King Zedekiah, then connect that total with a date that can be established in secular history. But as simple as that may seem, Biblical chronologists have struggled with this problem for centuries to get it right, and in the end, they have frankly failed. Therefore, let us go through this exercise and finally resolve this issue once and for all. This will be one of the most exciting intellectual journeys that anyone could take.

Adding Up the Numbers

Okay, at this point we will go step by step in what this author has delineated as eight distinct periods that constitute the chronology of the Bible as it is laid out for us. Let us now go *carefully* through those eight periods.

1. From the Creation of Adam until the Flood of Noah. This period has been clearly revealed in the Masoretic text so that no chronologist of note has ever gotten this numerical wrong. It is a total of 1656 years based upon the following data:

²² As stated above, the Masoretic Text will be the overall basis for the chronology set forth in this study. Where the Masoretic Text has been found to deviate from itself will be corrected with appropriate commentary based upon the earlier exemplar used by Josephus (*revealed here for the first time!*). See also: "Dissertation 5: Upon the Chronology of Josephus" in William Whiston, *Complete Works*, 849-72.

1. From the Creation of Adam until the Flood of Noah: 1656 Years

Table 1:

| Age of Father at Son's Birth | Years | Source |
|--|-------|----------|
| Adam fathered Seth at the age of | 130 | Gen 5:3 |
| Seth fathered Enos at the age of | 105 | Gen 5:6 |
| Enos fathered Cainan at the age of | 90 | Gen 5:9 |
| Cainan fathered Mahalaleel at the age of | 70 | Gen 5:12 |
| Mahalaleel fathered Jared the at age of | 65 | Gen 5:15 |
| Jared fathered Enoch at the age of | 162 | Gen 5:18 |
| Enoch fathered Methuselah at the age of | 65 | Gen 5:21 |
| Methuselah fathered Lamech at the age of | 187 | Gen 5:21 |
| Lamech fathered Noah at the age of | 182 | Gen 5:28 |
| Age of Noah at time of the Flood | 600 | Gen 7:6 |
| Total | 1656 | |

2. From the Beginning of the Flood of Noah until the Birth of Abram was 292 years:

The Flood continued for 1 year and 10 days (Gen 7:11, 8:14). The question that we should address here is: should the year of the Flood be included in the chronological stack up or not?

The son of Shem, Arphaxad, was born “two years after the flood” (Gen 11:10). The expression “after the flood” is key to understanding how we treat this year of the Flood in the overall stack up. The noted Biblical chronologist, Martin Anstey, offered the following noteworthy comment:

The expression “two years after the flood” in Gen 11:10 is not to be interpreted as meaning two years after the flood was over. The flood is treated as an epoch or point of time from which the Chronology is continued in the same manner as from the birth of one of the Patriarchs.²³

Anstey's evaluation is manifestly correct, which can be proven by the internal evidence itself. We need only to look closely at the connection between the dates of Noah, his son Shem, and his grandson Arphaxad. Noah was born in AM²⁴ 1056 (Gen 5:28). Shem was born in Noah's 502nd year (Gen 11:10). This brings us to AM 1558. Shem lived 100 years when his son Arphaxad was born, bringing us to AM 1658. Thus, with this observation we have the evidence that two years after the Flood must be reckoned from the beginning of the flood, and not counted from the end of the Flood.

We can further look at this from a different angle. Noah was 600 years old when the Flood commenced in AM 1656 (1056 + 600 = 1656). Next, we are told that Arphaxad (son of Shem, son

²³ Martin Anstey, *The Romance of Bible Chronology* (London: Marshall Bros., 1913), 1:69.

²⁴ AM is a Latin abbreviation for Anno Mundi, i.e., “in the year of the world.” It is counted from Adam's year one.

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of Noah) was born two years after the Flood. Adding these two years again brings us right back to the exact same year AM 1658 ($1656 + 2 = 1658$). Thus, the Bible interprets itself on this important matter. So, therefore, we can be reassured that the phrase “after the Flood” means to count after the beginning of the Flood and not after the Flood had ended. This is further reinforced by the keen insight of the following author:

The phrase “**after the flood**” doesn’t mean after the *full* duration of the flood, but after the *beginning* of the flood (compare Genesis 11:10 with Genesis 7:6; 9:28-29; 8:13). “Noah was 600 years old, and the flood of waters was on the earth” (Gen 7:6; see 7:10-11). “And Noah lived 350 years **after the flood**. And all the days of Noah were 950 years” (Gen 9:28-29). These verses tell us that Noah was 600 when the flood *began* and died 350 years “*after* the flood.” His total years being 950. This absolutely proves that “after the flood” means after the very beginning of the flood of waters. *If* “After the flood” meant after the full duration of the flood, then Noah would have been 951 years when he died, for the flood ended when Noah was 601 years (Gen 8:13).²⁵

We are now ready to move forward to the next major time period. This time period is without a doubt one of the most crucial time periods in the entire Bible to understand. But first let us understand some history of the Biblical chronology and how we got where we are today.

Enter Archbishop Ussher

Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656) produced the most admirable Biblical chronology up to his time. Unfortunately, his chronology was motive driven. He was trying to prove that Jesus was born 4000 years after Adam was created to the very year. Lamentably, this turned out to be a false premise. And because it was a false premise he had to manipulate Biblical chronology to make it come out to support that false premise. This is most seen in the fact that he was the one who came up with this whole idea that Abraham’s father, Terach, was 130 years old instead of 70 years when Abraham was born. It is now time to carefully go over the facts and draw accurate conclusions based on the evidence of the Biblical record, as well as other ancient testimony, that will guide us to the correct understanding.

3. From the Flood to the Birth of Abram: 292 Years:

Table 2:

| Age of Father at Son’s Birth | Years | Source |
|--|-------|-----------|
| Shem fathered Arphaxad 2 years after Flood | 2 | Gen 11:25 |
| Arphaxad fathered Salah at age | 35 | Gen 11:12 |
| Salah fathered Eber at age | 30 | Gen 11:12 |
| Eber fathered Peleg at age | 34 | Gen 11:16 |
| Peleg fathered Reu at age | 30 | Gen 11:18 |
| Reu fathered Serug at age | 32 | Gen 11:20 |

²⁵ Walter R. Dolan, *Chronology of the World* (San Jose, Calif.: BeComing-One Publications, 2011), 213.

Table 2:

| Age of Father at Son's Birth | Years | Source |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| Serug fathered Nahor at age | 30 | Gen 11:22 |
| Nahor fathered Terach at age | 29 | Gen 11:24 |
| Terach fathered Abram at age | 70 | Gen 11:26 |
| Total | 292 | |

The figure of 292 years after the Flood is confirmed by ancient sources working with the exact same data as provided in the Masoretic Text, as well as Josephus, who stated that:

Terah, who was the father of Abraham, who accordingly was the tenth from Noah, and was born in the **two hundred and ninety-second year** after the Deluge.²⁶

Even the Jewish work the *Seder Olam* agrees with this total:

From the Flood to the birth of Isaac 392 years.²⁷

The *Seder Olam* is counting from the beginning of the Flood in Noah's 600th year to the birth of Isaac in Abraham's 100th year. Therefore, if we take the 392 years of the *Seder Olam* minus the 100 years of Isaac's age, we get the same exact total as stated above by Josephus — 292 years! Thus, we are so far in agreement with what the Bible tells us, as well as with other ancient authorities.

How Old was Terach when His Son Abram Was Born?

Here we are faced with the biggest question of all time in Biblical chronological studies. This question is certainly not a trivial one. Indeed, it towers way above all other Biblical chronological issues. Why? Because this is where nearly everyone stumbles because of faulty reasoning.

First of all, we must establish the fact that the father of Abram,²⁸ Terach, was the age of 70 when Abram was born — *not 130*! And that is the biggest error that has been embraced by nearly every Biblical chronologist since that theory was first advanced by Archbishop James Ussher back in 1650.

In order to finally resolve this important issue we first must take a deep breath and finally go back and read the text and weigh the authority of the simple reading of Genesis 11:26:

When Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran (Gen 11:26).

This statement, as it stands, would lead one to believe that either Terach had triplets when he was 70 years old, or that he had three separate sons who were born in the same year by three different wives.²⁹ Certainly, this is a distinct possibility, but does it really make any sense? Unfortunately, we are deprived of a definite answer from Scripture on this important issue.

²⁶ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.6.5 [§148] (Whiston, 37).

²⁷ *Seder Olam* 1:1, "Creation of Jacob" (Guggenheimer, 13).

²⁸ The term "Avram/Abram" is used within this work until the time when his name was changed at the age of 99 years old; Abram (meaning "exalted father") to Abraham (meaning "father of a multitude") (Gen 17:5) — a name which exudes patriarchal primacy. Likewise, Sarah's name was later changed from Sorai (meaning "my princess") to Sarah (meaning "Princess") (Genesis 17:15). (Note: her name is spelled "Sorai" herein and not "Sarai," because the first vowel is a kamatz hatuph).

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It is a common (and generally the accepted theory of today) that Terach was not 70 years old when Abram was born, as is plainly stated in the Biblical text, but that Terach was actually 130 years old at the birth of his son, Abram. Since there is no direct statement in Scripture that says Terach was 130 at Abram's birth, then how did this theory come about? As already stated before, it was the ingenious brainchild of Archbishop James Ussher.

The belief that Terach was 130 years of age when he fathered Abram is explained in the following manner: Acts 7:4 intimates that Abram left Haran "when his father [Terach] was dead." Next, we are told that Terach was 205 years old when he died (Gen 11:32) and that Abram was 75 when he left Haran (Gen 12:4). Thus, it would appear (so the reasoning goes) that Terach had to have been at least 130 years old when Abram was born ($205 - 75 = 130$). Although this argument may appear to most chronologists to be a watertight explanation on the surface, it most definitely is not. That is why we need to pursue this important issue and settle this question once and for all.

First, let us consider a simple rule for understanding Biblical numbers. Numbers given in Scripture are given for a definite reason and should be relied upon. Otherwise, derived numbers, *i.e.*, numbers not explicitly mentioned in Scripture, but formulated indirectly from several other sources, should be considered secondary in importance. So, in this context, Terach's age of 70 for the birth of Abram is an explicit number from Scripture and should be considered as primary in importance. But Terach's age of 130 for the birth of Abram is a derived number formulated by human reasoning and should be considered secondary in importance. Why? Because derived numbers should be treated cautiously in the weight of actual numbers stated in Scripture. That is the first rule that has been broken in this theory by most Biblical chronologists.

Secondly, we must realize that the person of "Abraham" represents *THE* most important vital link in the sequence of chronological events for the entire Old Testament thereafter; so any seeming discrepancy must be thoroughly investigated and tied down.

Thirdly, we must come to the realization that there is simply no direct scriptural statement that Abram was born when his father was 130 years of age. Agreed? Fine! Because that is a perfect example of a derived number based upon assumptions, and not a direct number stated in Scripture. It is derived from the idea that Abram, at the age of 75, left his father's home upon the death of his father, who died at age 205. This has become the universally accepted interpretation of just about every Biblical chronologist since Archbishop Ussher who was the one who originally formulated this theory. Up until that time, no one ever explained such an idea. Here we have Archbishop Ussher's original formulation:

When Terah was seventy years old, Haran, the oldest of his three sons, was born {Ge 11:26}. Abram was not born for another "sixty years"³⁰ and that Abraham "was seventy-five years old when Terah his father died at the age of two hundred and five years {Ge 11:32; 12:1,4; Ac 7:4}."³¹

So where did Archbishop Ussher come up with the idea that Terach's son Haran was the only one who was born when Terach was 70; and not Abram, nor, for that matter, Nahor? What we have here plain and simple is a theory. It is a theory that when we look at it more closely, falls apart.

²⁹ The ambiguity of this statement has haunted Biblical chronologists from time immemorial. Indeed, if Terach had multiple wives (which was certainly possible), then it would be reasonable that Abram, Nahor, and Haran were half-brothers by three separate mothers all of whom conceived in Terach's 69th year. Such a theory to this author seems absurd.

³⁰ Not sure the reason why Ussher chose to put the words "sixty years" in quotation marks.

Nevertheless, Archbishop Ussher was granted praise for finally resolving an issue that apparently no one else had ever even considered until he formulated this remarkable explanation. And he did it using an interpretation of New Testament texts that the Jews would never have accepted. Indeed, a noted modern Biblical chronologist, Martin Anstey, eulogized this interpretation in the following manner:

The credit of the discovery of the age of Terah at the birth of Abram is due to Archbishop Ussher. It is one of the principal improvements of his system, and a proof of the acuteness of his intelligence, and the keenness of his insight into the chronological bearing of the statements contained in the text of Holy Scripture.³²

Really? Needless to say, not everyone was so in agreement with Anstey's assessment. John Jackson back in 1752 offered a brilliant counterpoise to this discussion:

...some learned Men have supposed by mere Hypothesis, such as *Vossius*, *Usser*, *Patric*, and others, that *Terah* was 130 Years old when *Abram* was born, though all the Texts, *Hebrew*, *Samaritan*, and *Greek*, agree that he was no more than 70 Years old, which they understand of his Age only, when he began to beget Children, and they suppose that *Abram* might be the youngest of the three Sons of *Terah*, and be born sixty Years after *Haran*. But this Hypothesis is plainly too absurd to be admitted, or to have been advanced by any learned Man. It is not only contrary to the natural Sense of the Words, but tends to confound the Computation of the postdiluvian Period by adding 60 Years to it, in Contradiction to all ancient Evidence.³³

The pivotal words here are “contrary to all ancient evidence,” which we will examine. Nevertheless, Floyd Nolan Jones, a strong supporter of Archbishop Ussher's chronology, believes that his theory is so overwhelmingly convincing that he does not even feel the need to explain it in his popularized book. To him, apparently, it is so self-explanatory that

Comparing Genesis 11:32 with 12:4, it may be seen that Abraham was 75 when Terah died at age 205.³⁴

Jones does what many chronologists do to win an argument. They toss out Scripture verses as if those verses are so self-explanatory to anyone that no further explanation would be necessary. But by leaving such an important theory unexplained as this is like saying; go look up these verses yourself and see if you do not automatically come up with the same conclusion that all modern-day chronologists have made? Such a proposition is less than satisfactory.

The 130-year figure of Terach's age at the birth of Abram should also give us pause for other reasons that many chronologists have most definitely overlooked, or indeed, deliberately ignored.

³¹ Ussher (*Annals*, 22). This theory has been accepted by multiple testimonies of leading chronologists of modern times, viz., Henry Fynes Clinton, *An Epitome of the Civil and Literary Chronology of Greece* (Oxford: University Press, 1851), 115-16; Philip Mauro, *The Wonders of Bible Chronology* (Ashburn, Va.: Hess Publications, 2001), 25-27; Anstey, *Romance*, 1:22; Herman L. Hoeh, *Compendium of World History*, vol. 1 (Pasadena, Calif.: Ambassador College Press, 1962), 1:248; Frank R. Klassen, *The Chronology of the Bible* (Nashville: Regel Publishing, Inc., 1975), 11; Walter Dolan, *The Chronology Papers* (San Jose, Calif.: The Becoming-One Church, 1977), 218-19; Ernest L. Martin, “New Discoveries in Chronology and Prophecy,” 1989, online at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p021102.htm> (accessed on Mar. 9, 2022); Floyd Nolan Jones, *Chronology of the Old Testament* (Green Forest, Ark.: Master Books, Inc., 2007), 25; Jan van Tuyt, *A New Chronology for Old Testament Times* (United Kingdom, Central Milton Keynes: AuthorHouse UK Ltd., 2012), 118-21, and countless others.

³² Anstey, *Romance*, 1:79.

³³ John Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities* (London: J. Noon, 1752), 1:101. Excellent observation.

³⁴ Jones, *Chronology*, 25.

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Not only does this theory fly in the face of a simple reading of Genesis 11:26, but does it even make any sense that there would be a 60-year gap between the birth of Haran and his brother Abram?

Also, we should note that in the text “Abram’s” name is listed first. So even if Terach did not have triplets or three sons born by three different women in the same year, why would Abram’s name be listed first if he was not born first?³⁵ On this Henry Fynes Clinton commented:

Abram is named first in Gen. XI. 26, 27 on account of his superior importance; as in Gen. VI. 10, IX. 18, X.1. Shem is named first, although Japheth was the elder brother: Gen. X. 2, 21. That the destined father of the faithful should be a younger son can create no difficulty; for preference of the younger to the elder was so frequent that it almost seems the rule. Thus Shem was the younger brother, Isaac the younger brother, Jacob the younger brother, Moses himself the younger brother. Judah from whom the royal line was to descend was the third son, David the youngest son of his father.³⁶

Yes, Abram’s name was certainly mentioned first because of his importance, but does that imply that the 70 years of Terach should be applied to Abram’s birth and not the other brothers? At this point it is time to call upon other ancient authorities to help us in reaching the correct conclusion.

Enter the Book of Jasher

The *Book of Jasher*, although a medieval Jewish Midrash, contributes to the conversation some very interesting chronological information that appears to have followed an ancient tradition that has some remarkable agreement with the *Book of Genesis*. For one thing, it agrees with the Biblical fact that Abram was born when Terach was 70 years old:

And Terah, the son of Nahor, prince of Nimrod’s host, was in those days very great in the sight of the king and his subjects, and the king and princes loved him, and they elevated him very high. And Terah took a wife, and her name was Amthelo, the daughter of Cornebo; and the wife of Terah conceived and bare him a son in those days. **Terah was seventy years old when he begat him**, and Terah called the name of his son that was born to him Abram, because the king had raised him in those days, and dignified him above all his princes that were with him.³⁷

So the tradition of the *Book of Jasher* is crystal clear in its wording, far less ambiguous than even that of the *Genesis* narration. This same source goes on to state that:

At that time died Nahor, son of Serug, in the forty-ninth year of the life of Abram son of Terah.³⁸

This Nahor I was Abram’s grandfather. Abram’s brother also had the same name because he was named after his uncle, and therefore, he became Nahor II.³⁹ Again, this agrees exactly with the Biblical numbers.⁴⁰

³⁵ Admittedly, being mentioned first does not necessarily mean that Abram was born first, but that he was first in importance in the divine narrative.

³⁶ Clinton, *Epitome*, 116.

³⁷ *Jasher* 7:49-51. However, the *Book of Jasher* also states that “Haran was forty-two when he begat Sarai, which was in the tenth year of the life of Abram” (*Jasher* 9:4). That would mean that Haran was born when his father Terah was 38 years old and that he was already 32 years old when his brother Abram was born. Although it is logical that Terach’s son Haran was born in Terach’s thirties (the average age of his seven predecessors was 31.4 years for their sons), this non-Biblical source cannot be used to overthrow the Biblical testimony as we have demonstrated thus far.

³⁸ *Jasher*, 11:12.

The *Book of Jasher* further stated that Abram was 58 years old when Noah died (Jasher 13:9). This number also agrees exactly with the data in the Bible.⁴¹ Thus, the author of the *Book of Jasher* was consistent throughout its numbers that Terach was 70 years old when Abram was born. The numbers from this source completely agree with those of the *Book of Genesis*.

Even though the *Book of Jasher* is a secondary source that we can dismiss if one so wishes, but consider that *The Book of Jasher* relates many things that are not recorded in the Bible, e.g., that Abram was hidden in a cave until age 10 (Jasher 7:5),⁴² or that he went to Noah and Shem to learn instruction from them of the ways of the Eternal (Jasher 9:5), and much more.⁴³ These Jewish traditions were handed down from medieval times and even from earlier times and are at least worthy to helping us fill in some of the blanks missing from the Biblical narrative.

Could it be that Moses used the same earlier sources that became the basis of the *Book of Jasher*? Possibly, and moreover, even more likely. And if that is so, then it goes beyond whether the *Book of Jasher* got it right or wrong as to when Abram was born. It just means that the way that the Biblical account was written appears to have some ambiguity that needed further investigation. It must be admitted that the data in the Bible was not as clear as it could have been. But if anything, the *Book of Jasher* seems to have finally cleared up that ambiguity.

Personally, this author believes that Genesis 11:26 should be understood as two different sets of components. First, we have: “When Terach had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram.” Then next we are told (in this same sentence, which, unfortunately, is all run together) that Terach had two other sons which we are also informed of, i.e., Nahor and Haran; their births not specified. It must be understood that the entire chronology of the Bible must not rest upon an ambiguity of a thesis born some three and half millennia after Abraham’s birth. This is no doubt the most important fact in the entire study of Biblical chronology. It must now be forever discarded.

³⁹ In modern Orthodox (Ashkenazic) Judaism, it is a “tradition” (not a law) to not name a child the same name as a living relative, for whatever reason. But among modern Sephardic Jews, it is the accepted practice to name children after living relatives. Thus Nahor II was named after his uncle while his uncle was still alive (on this see online at https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/1158837/jewish/The-Laws-of-Jewish-Names.ht (accessed on Mar. 9, 2022).

⁴⁰ Terach was born in the 29th year of his father, Nahor I (Gen 11:24), and he lived to be 119 years old (Gen 11:25). If Nahor I died when Abram was 49, as this verse plainly states, then this again agrees with the Bible that Terach was 70 at Abram’s birth (119 - 49 = 70).

⁴¹ If we tally up all the ages of the parents from Noah to Terach at the time of the birth of their sons listed, we get a total of 822 years. Noah lived to be 950 years old (Gen 9:28). If we subtract the 822 years from 950 we get 128 years. Then if we subtract the 58 years mentioned in the *Book of Jasher* from this 128-year figure, the remainder is 70 years for Terach’s age at the time when Abram was born. Therefore, the *Book of Jasher* supports the idea that Terach was 70 years old at the time when Abram was born. Whether or not this fact is to be accepted or summarily dismissed, the *Book of Jasher* does not support the premise that Abram was born in Terach’s 130th year, according to Ussher.

⁴² The Talmudic sages were also aware of the tradition that Abram had been hidden for the first ten years of his life: “Avraham was hidden by his father Terach for the first ten years of his life because the astrologers had warned Nimrod that this child would become powerful (*Babylonian Talmud*, Babal Batra 91a/Sed. Had.]” (Mattis Kantor, *The Jewish Time Line Encyclopedia* [Northvale, N. J.: Jacob Aaronson, 1992], 15).

⁴³ Where did the author of the *Book of Jasher* derive such amazing details? The plain and the simple answer is, we do not know. But the known facts that we can compare with from the Bible, the *Book of Jasher* agrees in an astonishing way, which is why this source is brought forth as a witness to this research.

Was Sorai the Daughter of Abram's Brother, Haran?

As an aside, it is helpful to look at another adjacent piece of information that is found in the *Book of Jasher* — one of which speaks of Abram's brother, Haran, as being the father of Abram's wife, Sorai:

And Haran, the son of Terah, Abram's oldest brother, took a wife in those days. Haran was thirty-nine years old when he took her; and the wife of Haran conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Lot. And she conceived again and bare a daughter, and she called her name Sarai. Haran was forty-two years old when he begat Sarai, which was in the tenth year of the life of Abram (Jasher 9:1-4).

Here we have another fact that agrees with the Bible. The ten-year difference in age between Abram and Sorai is given in Genesis 17:17. However, the confusion about whether Sorai was the daughter of Abram's brother Haran, or whether she was the daughter of Terach by a second wife, making Sorai Abram's half-sister, has been the source of a lot of misunderstanding down through the ages. There seems here to be conflicting statements in Genesis concerning Sorai. On the one hand it states that

... she is indeed my [Abram's] sister, the daughter of my father [Terach] but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife (Gen 20:12).

But on the other hand, the narrative states:

Abram and Nahor took wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. ... Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen 11:29, 31).

This verse identifies Sorai as being Terach's daughter-in-law, wife of Abram, but does not indicate that Sorai was also Terach's actual daughter.

Josephus also was ambiguous on this subject. First he states

Now Abraham had two brethren, Nahor and Haran; of these Haran left a son, Lot; as also Sarai and Milha his daughters ...⁴⁴

But then Josephus states:

Now Abram having no son of his own, adopted Lot, his brother Haran's son, and his wife Sarai's brother.⁴⁵

This verse indicates that Abram's brother Haran was also "Sarai's brother." If that is the case, we can infer that Haran and Sorai were born to the same father, Terach, but to a different mother than Abram (Gen 20:12). And if Haran was born before Abram and Sorai were born ten years after Abram, then we could assume that Terach had a harem of at least two wives.

In Jewish tradition, Sorai was indeed identified as being the daughter of Haran.⁴⁶ This interpretation, however, was based upon the preferred interpretation by the Rabbis in order to avoid

⁴⁴ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.6.5 [§151] (Whiston, 37).

⁴⁵ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.1 [§154] (Whiston, 38).

⁴⁶ In the Aggadah "Sarah is identified with Iscah, the daughter of Abraham's brother, Haran (Gen. 11:29), and thus Abraham's niece" (Aaron Rothkoff, "Sarah" in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. Cecil Roth and Geoffrey Wigoder. [New York: Macmillan Co., 1971-72], see online edition at http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0018_0_17522.html (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

Abram violating the later Mosaic proscription against incestuous relationships.⁴⁷ But what of the sons of Adam — were not their wives their sisters as well?

The mix-up seems to be that in Genesis 11:29, 31, where Sorai appears to have had two names. First, she is called “Sorai,” then it seems that she is called “Iscah,” but then following that reference she is called “Sorai” again. Certainly, we should ask ourselves, why would these verses first use the name Sorai, then all of a sudden start using the name of Iscah to describe the same person, and then go back to using the name Sorai, all within this same context? Does this make any sense? It seems to this author that there is more here than meets the eye. Obviously, if one is honest with these verses, one would have to admit that there is nothing in them that says that Iscah is an alternate name for Sorai. What we are being told here by interpreters is that Haran had three children, viz., Lot, Milcah, and Iscah. However, the *Book of Jasher* says that Haran had three children, Lot, Milcah, and Sorai (Jasher 9:2-3).⁴⁸

Nevertheless, because people have assumed that “Iscah” is just another name for Sorai, they then have further assumed that Sorai was the daughter of Haran. And, as has been seen, this false assumption goes all the way back to the author of the *Book of Jasher*. And once you make that false assumption, then that would seem to justify the theory of a late birth for Abram in Terach’s 130th year. Yet, we know that Abram himself explained his relationship with Sorai:

she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father but not the daughter of my mother (Gen 20:12).

Many believe that Abram was just telling Pharaoh something that would get him out of trouble. Really? So are we to believe that Abram lied to Pharaoh? That would place Abram as bearing false witness, one of the later commandments of God in the “Ten Commandments?” In spite of this conundrum, we read that

Because Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, **my commandments**, my statutes, and my laws (Gen 26:5).

So now the question is, how on earth can people propose such an argument in the light of what the Bible tells us about Abram’s character? Furthermore, the ages given in the *Book of Jasher* add up far better with Terach being 70 rather than 130 at Abram’s birth. The *Book of Jasher*, like the Bible, tells us that Terach was 70 years old when Abram was born. And it says that at that time Haran was 42 when Sorai was born. This means that Haran was born when Terach was 38 years old. This gives us a 32-year difference between the ages of Haran and Abram. So, if Haran was born when Terach was the age of 38, this seems about right given the ages of Terach’s predecessors. This is confirmed in the fact that since Sorai was ten years younger than Abram, she then was born when Terach was 80 (80 - 42 = 38). Thus, Terach was 38 years old when Haran was born, exactly as the *Book of Jasher* states.

So far as Nahor is concerned, neither the Bible, nor the *Book of Jasher*, nor any other source discovered, gives us the date of Nahor’s birth. The only clue that we have is that he seemingly may have been still alive, along with his brother Abraham, at his father’s death.

⁴⁷ “Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother” (Deut 27:22, NKJV).

⁴⁸ This is in direct contradiction to what Genesis 11:27-29 states.

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At any rate, if Haran was in fact born when Terach was 38, and he had a daughter, Milcah, who was old enough to marry Nahor II, then we must assume that Milcah was probably born around 20 years later when Terach was 58 and was able to marry when Terach was around age 73. And if Nahor II was born around that time then Terach was around age 35, and Nahor II would have married around age 38 based on Milcah's age of marriage. Even though this may be considered pure speculation, one would have to admit that the Iscah = Sorai "daughter of Haran" theory is flimsy on the surface. More importantly, there is nothing in this speculation that would overthrow the fact that Abram was born when Terach was 70 years old.

The important thing to consider here is that if Haran and Nahor II were born before Abram, then we still have the problem as to why Abram's name would be listed first in the three sons of Terach in Genesis 11:26? Either Abram was the first born, or as stated above, he was listed first as being first in importance. Thus, there is no argument to be made concerning Abram's name being made first, one way or another.

Did Abram Leave Haran upon his Father's Death?

Now we get down to the real important fact of the matter that is what convinces so many chronologists that Archbishop Ussher's theory of Terach being age 130 at Abram's birth was correct. The belief that Abram left Haran to go to Canaan only upon his father's death is seemingly fortified by the statement that the disciple of Jesus, Stephen [the martyr] had made:

"Gentlemen, brothers, and fathers, listen! The God of Majesty appeared to our father Abraham while being in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran; and said to him: 'Depart from your country and your relatives and come into a country which I will reveal to you.' Then having departed from the country of the Chaldeans, he settled in Haran. And from there, after the death of his father, He resettled him in this country in which we are now living" (Acts 7:2-4, translation the author's).

The words in single quotes in the above passage from Acts are directly taken from the first sentence of Genesis 12:1. The full quote from the actual passage is as follows:

The Eternal said to Abram, "Depart from your country and from your relatives and from the home of your father to the land which I will show you. A great nation I will make of you. I will sanctify you and magnify your name so that you will be extolled. I will praise those who praise you, and condemn the one who denounces you; It is because of you that all the families of the earth will be glorified." Accordingly, Abram did depart as the Eternal had instructed him; Lot accompanying him. Abram was [the son of] five years and seventy years when he departed from Haran (Gen 12:1-4, translation the author's).

The first thing that stands out so glaringly is that Stephen's version states that God appeared to Abram while he was "in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Haran," whereas in Genesis 12 Abram is in Haran when God told him to "depart from your country." So, do we have a conflict here, or what? Which is it; was Abram in Ur or was he in Haran when God told him to leave his father?

Next, notice that there is nothing in the Hebrew text about departing after his father had died. Indeed, the Hebrew text is quite clear that Abram was told to leave his father's house and his relatives behind, indicating that his father Terach was still very much alive when Abram left him in Haran to go to Canaan. So, the question is, where on earth did Stephen get the idea that Abram left Haran only after his father had died? Good question!

Even some of the ancient copyists had a problem with this apparent discrepancy because we have evidence that Acts 7:2-4 has been the cause of some textual variants. Bruce Metzger noted that the statement of Stephen with the phrase “after the death of his father” was subject to several manuscripts relocating this passage from the end of verse 4, to the end of verse 2, obviously because of this apparent ambiguity:

Several Old Latin witnesses (including it^{sig} P) remove the clause *μετα το αποθανειν τον πατερα αυτου* [after the death of his father] from its place in ver. 4 and insert it just before ver. 3. Probably the motive for this alteration was to bring the text into closer accord with the interpretation that the ordinary reader of Gn 11.27 ff. would be likely to derive from the progress of the narrative.⁴⁹

Metzger further commented in a footnote:

In actuality, however, a strict analysis of the account in Genesis proves that Abraham departed from Haran many years before his father's death at the age of 205 years (Gn 11:32). According to Gn 11.26 Terah was 70 years old when Abraham was born, and according to Gn 12.4 Abraham was 75 years old when he left Terah, who therefore had sixty more years of life ($205 - [70 + 75] = 60$).⁵⁰

We should also take note of the fact that in Stephen's statement after the word “Haran” there is a hard stop. The statement about Abraham's father dying is a separate statement; it applies to a time in Abraham's life when he no longer had any reason to keep any ties with that city.

Remember that it was Terach who was the one who took Abram, Sorai, and Lot from Ur of the Chaldees with the intention of settling in Canaan, but when they got to Haran,⁵¹ they all settled there instead (Gen 11:31). And it was some time afterward that Abram moved to Canaan. But then we read that the LORD said to Abram later on

‘I am the LORD who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess’ (Gen 15:7).

But wait a minute, it was while Abram was in Haran that God told him to go to the land of Promise (Gen 12:1-4), not while he was in Ur of the Chaldees — or was it? In any event, there is now some confusion introduced into the timeline narrative that cannot be easily explained.

The *Book of Jasher* offers another perspective:

Abram remained in the land [Haran] three years, and at the expiration of three years the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him; ‘I am the Lord who brought thee forth from Ur Casdim, and delivered thee from the hands of all thine enemies’ (Jasher 13:3).

So, once again, it is the tradition of the *Book of Jasher* that helps us clear up the matter that it was while Abram was in Haran that God called him and that he had actually been in Haran for a period of three years before settling in Canaan. Then the *Book of Jasher* continues that

Abram rose and took his wife and all belonging to him, and he went to the land of Canaan as the Lord had told him; and Abram was fifty years old when he went from Haran (Jasher 13:5).

⁴⁹ See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2d ed. (New York: American Bible Society, 1994), 300.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, fn 2.

⁵¹ This city most likely had originally a Sumerian name; but was evidently renamed by Terach in memory of his beloved son, Haran, who had died back in Ur.

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Here again, we have another conflict because according to the Bible Abram was 75 years of age when he went to Canaan from Haran (Gen 12:4) — not 50! Typically, the *Book of Jasher* has been reasonably consistent with the Biblical numbers. This behooves us that we should use caution before arbitrarily denouncing Jasher's numbers as being false. Obviously, the narratives between the Bible and the *Book of Jasher* are uneven here. But is it possible that we can integrate the two sources to come up with a reasonable synthesis of the data that makes sense? Is there something significant during Abram's year 50? According to the *Book of Jasher*, indeed there was.

Abram: A Graduate of the Noah/Shem University?

Abram is first introduced to us in the Bible in Genesis 11:27-31. With this introduction of Abram into the Biblical chronicle, we are presented with, frankly, the beginnings of the entire history of Jewish and Christian thought. We must remember that Adam and Eve fell short of following and obeying their creator. This is a sharp contrast to the character of Abram.

Abram's real story first begins in the Bible in the next chapter, Genesis 12:1-4. James L. Kugel asked a provoking question:

... what had Abraham done to deserve these things [the land promise for his progeny]? Moreover, if God was so pleased with Abraham, why did He begin by telling him to leave his homeland? To leave one's homeland meant leaving the security of family and friends and becoming a defenseless wanderer. If God had truly wished to bless Abraham and grant him all manner of good things, would He not have at least allowed him to stay where he was?⁵²

These are exceptionally good questions. Why, we must also ask, did God single out this one person by the name of Abram to become the father of many great nations and promise him that his name would be great and that all the families of the earth would be blessed because of him (Gen 12:3)? What on earth did Abram do to deserve this greatest of all honors? These questions are significant to the overall understanding of the Theology of Judaism and Christianity.

The Bible continually speaks highly of this exceptional man, a descendant of Noah and Shem, who not only lived under the pagan influence of his society in Sumeria (where the arch-evil Nimrod ruled), but even under the influence of his idol worshiping father (Terach) and his brother (Nahor II). So, what quality did Abram possess that he was singled out to be the father of many nations and inherit the great promises we read of in the Bible?

That Abraham was indeed the father of the Hebrew nation, and many more nations, was reaffirmed a thousand years after Abraham by Isaiah the prophet, who was still able to state this fact:

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many (Isa 51:1-2).

The question as to why God chooses the people he does may be a mystery beyond our understanding, whether it be Moses, Joshua, Elijah, David, Isaiah, Josiah, Ezra, Peter, Paul, or you. But was there something in Abram's background that helped prepare him for his great calling?

Let us move forward in our analysis and see what we come up with. Once again let us peek into what Jewish tradition informs us through the *Book of Jasher*:

⁵² James L. Kugel, *The Bible as it Was* (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997), 133.

Haran was forty-two years old when he begat Sarai, which was in the **tenth year of the life of Abram**; and in those days Abram and his mother and nurse went out from the cave, as the king and his subjects had forgotten the affair of Abram. And when Abram came out from the cave, he went to Noah and his son Shem, and he remained with them to learn the instruction of the Lord and his ways ... **And Abram was in Noah's house thirty-nine years** (Jasher 9:5-6).

So here we have Abram being 10 years old when he and his mother and nurse came out of hiding, and then Abram spends the next 39/40 years with Noah and Shem. That brings us to Abram's 49th/50th year. Then we read:

And in the fiftieth year of the life of Abram son of Terah, Abram came forth from the house of Noah, and went to his father's house (Jasher 11:13).

Think about the fact that Abram spent a significant 40-year period with Noah and Shem. If this report is true, then that would be equivalent to a doctoral degree and internship in learning firsthand from his ancestors who also were singled out as special ministers in the plan of God. Noah was referred to by the Apostle Peter as a "Preacher of Righteousness" (2 Pet 2:6). And Jewish tradition also identifies Shem as being none other than the Melchizedek,⁵³ the king of Salem, who entertained Abram (Gen 14:18-20).⁵⁴

Now we introduce the Jewish historian of the first century, Josephus. He related concerning the wisdom, knowledge, and sagacity of Abram. We have to ask, how was it possible that Abram got such knowledge? Josephus tells that

He was a person of great sagacity, both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his opinions; for which reason he began to have higher notions of virtue than others had, and he determined to renew and to change the opinion all men happened then to have concerning God; for he was the first that ventured to publish this notion. That there was but one God, the Creator of the universe.⁵⁵

Although Abram here acquired the distinction of being the first to teach monotheism, he most certainly derived that notion from Noah and Shem. And we must remember that the Chaldeans were accredited for their ability in being the first astronomers.

Simplicius, a Latin writer in the sixth century CE, recorded that when Alexander the Great defeated Darius III of Persia at Gaugamela, he immediately went to the ancient city of Babylon. While he was there, he received the accumulated astronomical observations of the Babylonian astrologers stretching back 1903 years.⁵⁶ This would mean that the Chaldeans began to record their observations 20 years before the Tower of Babel event, *viz.*, 2234 BCE (331 + 1903 = 2234) or 211 years before the birth of Abram.

⁵³ *Targum Neophyti* Genesis 14:18; *Avot de Rabbi Natan* (A) 2; Ephraem, *Commentary on Genesis* 11:2. Melchizedek means "My king is righteous."

⁵⁴ Noah was still alive in Abram's 50th year and lived another eight years. Shem outlived Abraham by another 35 years. It may be that after the death of Noah, Shem relocated from Mesopotamia to the city of Salem in Canaan (later to be known as Jerusalem) and it is there that he became known as the "righteous king," *i.e.*, Melchizedek. It could also mean that when Abram was with Noah and Shem, that he became literate and gathered all the material that became the basis for the traditions that were the foundations of the *Book of Genesis*, upon which Moses drew his literary work.

⁵⁵ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.1 [§§ 154-55] (Whiston, 38).

⁵⁶ Simplicius, *De Caelo* ("About the Heavens"), 1.2, *apud* Ussher, *The Annals*, 22.

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Abram was thus living at the center of astronomical science of his day. As a result, he could see that the planets and stars, which many of the Chaldeans began to worship as gods, could not be gods because they were subject to the laws of planetary motions and not able to exercise free choice.⁵⁷

According to the Babylonian historian Berossos, Josephus offers the following quotation:

“In the tenth generation after the Flood,⁵⁸ there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skillful in the celestial science.”⁵⁹

Josephus further testifies:

But Hecataeus does more than barely mention him; for he composed and left behind him a book concerning him. And Nicholas of Damascus, in the fourth book of his history, says thus: “Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land about Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans.”⁶⁰

It is interesting that we often just think of Abram coming into Canaan with only his immediate family. But here we see that Abram was a reigning monarch in Damascus with a standing army. Indeed, if Abram even defeated the Assyrian army and their allies in the valley of the kings, then we have to conclude that Abram was one of the greatest figures of his time and may even have been regarded as a king in his own right.⁶¹ Also, consider that if Abram had an army that could defeat the Assyrians, then his army must have been of sufficient size in order to achieve such a military victory.

After Abram’s victory over the Assyrians, he was greeted by his old mentor, Shem — the King of Righteousness — in the city of Salem, which Josephus claims was afterward called “Jerusalem.”⁶²

Again, Josephus tells us that when Abram went down to Egypt that

he was admired by them in those conferences as a very wise man, and one of great sagacity, when he discoursed on any subject he undertook; and this not only in understanding it, but in persuading other men also to assent to him. He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for, before Abram came into Egypt, they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also.⁶³

Thus, from these testimonies we would have to conclude that Abram was an Isaac Newton of his day; and additionally, a great spiritual leader being personally taught by Noah and Shem, and was a king in his own right, commanding a military force that could defeat the Assyrians. And this all occurred before he was called out by God. He was a king with vast wealth and knowledge. And he obtained that towering wealth and knowledge under the tutelage of Noah and Shem. His astronomical and mathematical knowledge were derived from the Chaldeans. Undoubtedly, this is why Abraham was chosen by God to be the father of many great nations.

⁵⁷ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.1 [§156] (Whiston, 38).

⁵⁸ The tenth generation after Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah, points directly to Abraham.

⁵⁹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.2 [§158] (Whiston, 38).

⁶⁰ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.2 [§159] (Whiston, 38).

⁶¹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.10.1 [§§ 176-78] (Whiston, 39).

⁶² Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.10.2 [§180] (Whiston, 39).

⁶³ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.8.2 [§§167-68] (Whiston, 39).

Abram Leaves his Father ... Why?

When Abram returned to his home in Haran he was now the age of 50. But most importantly, he now was a changed man. He had received his “Ph.D.” (so to speak) from the Noah/Shem University. Now no other person in his day was more qualified to transmit the traditions of Enoch, Noah, the “Preacher of Righteousness” (2 Pet 2:5), and Shem, who fought against the evils of Nimrod and his descendants, than Abram. And as such, no one was more convinced that idolatry was something that was evil and that he had to fight against.

But his father, Terach, was not on the same page. He was not only an idolater himself, but he created and sold items of idolatry. This could be none other than an extreme conflict with Abram and his father.

In the *Book of Jubilees* we read:

And it came to pass in the sixth week, in the seventh year thereof, that Abram said to Terah his father, saying, ‘Father!’ And he said, ‘Behold, here am I, my son.’ ‘And he said,

‘What help and profit have we from those idols which thou dost worship, And before which thou dost bow thyself?’⁶⁴

For there is no spirit in them,⁶⁵
For they are dumb forms, and a misleading of the heart.
Worship them not:

Worship the God of heaven,
Who causes the rain and the dew to descend on the earth
And does everything upon the earth,⁶⁶

And has created everything by His word,⁶⁷
And all life is from before His face.

Why do ye worship things that have no spirit in them?
For they are the work of (men’s) hands,⁶⁸

And on your shoulders do ye bear them,
And ye have no help from them,⁶⁹

But they are a great cause of shame to those who make them,
And a misleading of the heart to those who worship them:
Worship them not.”

And his father said unto him, ‘I also know it, my son, but what shall I do with a people who have made me to serve before them? And if I tell them the truth, they will slay me; for their soul cleaves to them to worship them and honour them. Keep silent, my son, lest they slay thee.’ And these words he spake to his two brothers, and they were angry with him and he kept silent. And in the fortieth jubilee, in the second week, in the seventh year thereof, Abram took to himself a

⁶⁴ The *Apocalypse of Abraham* also utters Abram’s disdain for idolatry which causes Nimrod to avow to destroy him in a fiery furnace (see http://www.pseudepigrapha.com/pseudepigrapha/Apocalypse_of_Abraham.html (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

⁶⁵ Ps 135:17.

⁶⁶ Jer 14:22.

⁶⁷ John 1:1-3; Ps 33:6; Heb 11:3; 2 Esdras 6:38.

⁶⁸ Jer 10:1-10.

⁶⁹ Isa 46:5-7; Jer 10:1-6.

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wife, and her name was Sarai, the daughter of his father, and she became his wife. And Haran, his brother, took to himself a wife in the third year of the third week, and she bare him a son in the seventh year of this week and he called his name Lot. And Nahor, his brother, took to himself a wife. And in the sixtieth year of the life of Abram, that is, in the fourth week, in the fourth year thereof, Abram arose by night, and burned the house of the idols, and he burned all that was in the house, and no man knew it. And they arose in the night and sought to save their gods from the midst of the fire. And Haran hastened to save them, but the fire flamed over him, and he was burnt in the fire, and he died in Ur of the Chaldees before Terah his father, and they buried him in Ur of the Chaldees. And Terah went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, he and his sons, to go into the land of Lebanon and into the land of Canaan, and he dwelt in the land of Haran, and Abram dwelt with Terah his father in Haran two weeks of years. And in the sixth week, in the fifth year thereof Abram sat up throughout the night on the new moon of the seventh month to observe the stars from the evening to the morning, in order to see what would be the character of the year with regard to the rains, and he was alone as he sat and observed. ...⁷⁰

After Abram returned home to his father when he was the age of 50 years, Abram and his father had a falling out over his father's idolatry. And when Abram out of rage smashed his father's idols, Terach himself was outraged over his son's audacious act. Terach thereupon decided to go against his son Abram, even to the point that he went before king Nimrod to have Abram come before Nimrod in order to be judged by him. Next, we read that Terach testified to Nimrod:

And he [Terah] said, I beseech thee my lord, to hear me — Now fifty years back a child was born to me, and thus has he done to my gods and thus has he spoken ... (Jasher 11:51).

Here the *Book of Jasher* gives us a precise chronological datum in the life of Abram in his 50th year.⁷¹ And we further read that Abram's brother, Haran, was also found to be complicit in the charges of Nimrod, so both Abram and Haran were apparently captured and cast into a burning furnace. According to this account Haran died in that fire because "his heart was not perfect with the Lord" (Jasher 12:26), but Abram was spared from dying in that fire through divine intervention, apparently due to his righteousness (in the sight of the Lord).

Next, we are told that Abram returned to his father's house for another two years, at which time Nimrod had a dream about Abram standing before him with a sword. Nimrod then had a dream interpreter explain that:

Now therefore my king, surely thou knowest that it is now fifty-two years since thy sages saw this at the birth of Abram ... (Jasher 12:57).

Abram's servant Eliezer overheard the king ordering his men to arrest Abram. Alas, Eliezer had to then swiftly return to Terach's residence in order to alert Abram what the intentions of Nimrod were. Upon this revelation, Abram flees back to the safety of Noah and Shem where he stayed "one month" until the matter died down (Jasher 12:61). Then Abram's father, Terach, came to visit his son at the home of Noah. Abram said to his father:

⁷⁰ Jubilees 12:1-17 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 2:30-31).

⁷¹ It appears that many of the major events in Abraham's life curiously occurred in multiples of 25 years. Notice: Abram, age 50, graduated from the Noah/Shem University (as related in the *Book of Jasher*). Also, in that same year, Nimrod had a dream of the destruction of the wicked, and the triumph of Abraham's seed in the last days (Jasher 12:45). At age 75, Abram moved from Ur to Haran (Jasher 13:1), then to Canaan. When Abraham turned age 100 Isaac was born and the Covenant was confirmed. At age 125 Abraham's son Isaac was "sacrificed" (Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.13.2 [§227], Whiston, 43); at age 150, Abraham married Keturah (2 years after Sarah died); at age 175, Abraham died.

Arise, let us go together to the land of Canaan, that we may be delivered from his hand, lest thou perish also through him in the latter days (Jasher 12:65).

So Terah took his son's advice and decided to move to Canaan.

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of his son Abram, and all the souls of his household and went with them from Ur Casdim to go to the land of Canaan. And when he came as far as the land of Haran they remained there, for it was exceedingly good land for pasture, and of sufficient extent for those who accompanied them (Jasher 13:1)

This story is pretty much a verbatim recollection of what we read in Genesis 11:31. Continuing:

And Abram remained in the land three years, and at the expiration of three years the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him; I am the Lord who brought thee forth from Ur Casdim, and delivered thee from the hands of all thine enemies, etc. (Jasher 13:3).

So, at his point, this brings us to Abram's year 55 ($52 + 3 = 55$). But here is where the *Book of Jasher* gets the chronology mixed-up because it says two verses later (in *Jasher* 13:5) that Abram was 50 years old when he left Ur to go to Haran. And he apparently remained there for another 20 years before he left Haran when he was 70 years old (Gen 12:4) and his father was 140 years old.⁷²

The important thing to remember is that Abram did not remain an additional 60 years in Haran twiddling his thumbs and waiting for his father to die before he could settle in Canaan. To believe in such a scenario requires us to also believe that he defied God's direct order and simply said to himself, "Well, I think I'll just hang around my father's house until after he dies, then I will go to Canaan after that event occurs." How does that square with the statement that Abram "obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen 26:5)? God gave Abram the Promise in Genesis 12:1-4 and immediately we read: "So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him." There is simply nothing here about Abram having to wait to fulfill God's command only until the death of his father.

Nevertheless, there still remained some connection with Abraham and the city of Haran due to his father and his brothers living there. Abraham must have returned many times to visit with his family in Haran, including his father, Terach, and his brother, Nahor, until finally, the day came when his father did die.

So, when Abraham got the news that his father had died, it is certain that he went back to Haran for his father's funeral. After Abraham had returned to Haran for his father's funeral, it would seem, then it was at this point in time that Abraham broke all ties with the city of Haran and permanently settled in the land of Canaan. Maybe it is in this context that Stephen understood that Abraham left Haran (once and for) upon his father's death. And we should take note of the fact that there is no amount of years given in Stephen's account, only a general overall picture of events.

The first-century Jewish commentator Philo Judaeus, who was a contemporary of Stephen (*ca.* 25 BCE – 50 CE), also gave the impression that Abram migrated from Haran after his father died:

Now it is not probable that any one of those persons who are acquainted with the law are ignorant that Abraham had previously migrated from Chaldea when he came to live in Charran. But after his father died he then departed from this land of Chaldea, so that he has now migrated from two different places.⁷³

⁷² If Abram could freely travel to Egypt, then it was no problem for him to go back and forth from Ur and Haran.

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We should understand this in the light of the fact that Abram finally left Haran behind him once and for all after his father's death. This may have been the prevailing view in the first century and where Stephen may have been influenced by such a tradition. Indeed, in this light, let us re-read Stephen's discourse again with this new insight:

The God of glory **appeared** to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, **before he lived in Haran**, and said to him, "Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you" (Acts 7:2-3).

There is nothing stated in this verse about Abraham's father's being dead at that time. What Stephen actually said at this time was that the appearance of God to Abraham occurred while he was still in Mesopotamia, *i.e.*, still in the Sumerian city of Ur of the Chaldees.⁷⁴ This was possibly when Abram was age 50 and when he returned from the home of Noah and Shem. The confusion about whether God brought Abram from Ur to Haran may have given rise from the statement that Nehemiah made some fourteen centuries later:

You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham (Neh 9:7).

It would appear that God had shown Abram, apparently by a vision, while still living in Ur, that the "promised land" that his progeny would someday possess. How old was Abram when God gave him that promise? The Bible does not here tell us; it only states that it occurred "before he lived in Haran," and while he was still living in Mesopotamia. Yet, the confusion remains because the wording surrounding these texts is certainly not as precise enough as one could wish.⁷⁵

The Unconditional Promise

There is something else significant in what Stephen stated that concerns this promise:

He [God] did not give him [Abram] any of it as a heritage, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him as his possession and to his descendants after him, even though he had no child (Acts 7:5).

The "promise" that Stephen was referring to was still unfulfilled; it was an unconditional promise that did not apply to Abram in his own lifetime but was something that would occur far into the future. This also accords with the promise of Genesis 12:3: "In you all the families of the earth will be blessed." This did not happen in Abraham's day, and it remains unfulfilled even to this day (Heb 11:13, 39). It is a promise still for the future.

⁷³ Philo Judaeus, "On the Migration of Abraham," 32.177 in *The Works of Philo*, tr. C. D. Yonge (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrikson Publishers, Inc., 1993), 270.

⁷⁴ We are reminded by modern scholars that: "the form 'Ur of the Chaldees' is an anachronism, for the Chaldeans arrived there only in the eleventh century B.C." (Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-Yonah, ed., *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* [New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976], 26). Needless to say, this expression was common when the *Book of Exodus* was finally redacted and canonized in the time of Ezra in the fifth century BCE.

⁷⁵ It could be said that there is some ambiguity in this text, but the ambiguity appears to be derived from a dislocation of the subject matter. That these texts appear to be dislocated was observed by Jewish commentators long ago. In the printed editions one finds inverted nunim. The original meaning of these signs in Greek sources was that the section enclosed by the sigma and [(] antisigma [)] did not suit its present place in the text. "An additional case, not attested in the [printed] manuscripts, is mentioned in *Minhat Shay*⁺ and the *Mp* of the RB2 (second Rabbinic Bible) on Gen 11:32 'in Haran' ... The inverted nun in this place possibly indicated that the verse did not occur in its correct place, for a chronological calculation reveals that the death of Terah mentioned here ought to have appeared after the following sections (Ginsburg, *Introduction*, 345)," Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (3rd ed., Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2011), 51.

Jesus referred to this Abrahamic Promise when he stated: “Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth” (Matt 5:5). Yet, there were partial fulfillments down through the history of Abraham’s descendants and throughout the history of Israel’s people.

Abraham, no doubt, must have had a home base in Haran while his father was still alive due to the vast wealth that he had acquired there, as the next verse explains:

Abram took his wife Sarai and his brother’s son Lot, and all the possessions that they had gathered, and the persons whom they had acquired in Haran (Gen 12:5).

This verse is clear that Abram had acquired a lot of possessions that may have taken years to accumulate while he was in Haran.⁷⁶ Obviously, after Terach settled in Haran, Abram continued on his journey to Canaan which was the land that God would “show him.” That was his earthly inheritance. But once Abram went to the land of Canaan, there was nothing to prevent him from returning to Haran, where he spent nearly a quarter-century there acquiring his vast wealth. But we must now get back on track as to how old was Terach when Abram was born. This important question must be settled now.

The Age of Terach at Abram’s Birth according to Ancient Sources

It is at this juncture that the thesis of Archbishop Ussher meets its greatest challenge. It is here where the present author finds no support for it in all the annals of history prior to his remarkable theory that Terach was 130 years when his son Abram was born. Without such support of ancient testimony, Ussher’s theory must be downgraded to an unproven hypothesis?

1. ***Seder Olam***: The Jewish rabbis who produced the chronology for the Jewish people entitled the *Seder Olam* placed the birth of Terach in the year of the world as 1878 BCE and the birth of Abram in the year 1948 BCE.⁷⁷ The difference between these two dates is exactly 70 years apart.⁷⁸

2. ***The Book of Jubilees***: The *Book of Jubilees* stated that Abram only remained in Haran for a period of 14 years, and then, when Abram left his father’s house, his father Terach, who was still alive according to Jubilees, gave Abram his blessing:

And Terah went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, he and his sons, to go into the land of Lebanon and into the land of Canaan, and he dwelt in the land of Haran, and Abram dwelt with Terah his father in Haran two weeks of years [14 years]. ... And it came to pass in the seventh year of the sixth week that he spoke to his father and informed him, that he would leave Haran to go into the land of Canaan to see it and return to him. And Terah his father said unto him; “Go in peace.”⁷⁹

It can readily be seen here that according to the author of *Jubilees*, Terach was alive and well when Abram left his father’s house in Haran to go to the land of Canaan. In fact, Terach gave his son, Abram, a blessing before he left.

Thus, the chronology of the *Book of Jubilees* is that the birth of Terach occurred in the 37th Jubilee, week 6, year 7 (referred to as AM 1806)⁸⁰ and the birth of Abram occurred in the 39th Jubi-

⁷⁶ *The Dead Sea Scrolls* tells us that Abram spent five years in Haran before going to Canaan (“A Genesis Commentary” [4Q252, 2:9-10] in Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* [4th ed.] (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 301-02). And as we have seen the *Book of Jasher* (12:45) this intimates that it was 23 years that Abram lived in Haran

⁷⁷ According to the *Seder Olam* chronology (*Seder Olam* 1:1, “Creation of Jacob” [Guggenheimer, 38]), Abram was born in Anno Mundi 1948, and left Haran at age 75 in AM 2023, which equates to 1948 BCE. What a coincidence on the AM and BCE numbers!

⁷⁸ Kantor, *Jewish Time Line Encyclopedia*, 10, 15.

⁷⁹ Jubilees 12:15, 28-29 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 2:31-32).

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lee, week 2, year 7 (AM 1876),⁸¹ a period separated by exactly 70 years. Therefore, the author of the *Book of Jubilees* supported the idea that Abram was born when his father was 70 years old.

3. **The *Book of Jasher*:** As brought out above, the *Book of Jasher* plainly tells us:

And Terah, the son of Nahor, prince of Nimrod's host, was in those days very great in the sight of the king and his subjects, and the king and princes loved him, and they elevated him very high. And Terah took a wife, and her name was Amthelo, the daughter of Cornebo; and the wife of Terah conceived and bare him a son in those days. Terah was seventy years old when he begat him, and Terah called the name of his son that was born to him Abram, because the king had raised him in those days, and dignified him above all his princes that were with him.⁸²

This direct statement here from the *Book of Jasher* that "Terah was seventy years old when he begat [Abram]" is testimony to at least the fact that this source knew nothing of Ussher's theory.

4. **Josephus:** The ancient Jewish historian Josephus (ca. 37–100 CE) knew of no theory of Terach being 130 years old when Abram was born, for he plainly tells us that the son of Nahor

was Terah, who was the father of Abraham, who accordingly was the tenth from Noah, and was born in the two hundred and ninety-second year after the Deluge; for Terah begat Abram, **in his seventieth year**.⁸³

5. **Philo Judaeus:** Philo Judaeus (ca. 25 BCE– 50 CE) certainly seems to imply that Terach was alive when Abram departed from Haran when he says:

For it is said in the scriptures that "Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Charran (Gen 12:4);" although his father Terah ... lived there till the day of his death (Gen 17:32).⁸⁴

This shows us that Abram did not leave Haran upon the death of his father, but left Haran while his father was still alive. So, Philo gives no reason to synchronize Terach's death at age 205 with Abram's move to Haran at age 75.

6. **Dead Sea Scrolls:**

He gave the land to Abraham, his beloved. [Terah] was one hundred and for[ty-five years old when he went forth with them] from Ur of the Chaldees and came to Haran (xi, 31). Now Ab[ram was se]venty years old and for five years Abram dwelt in Haran. And afterwards Abram went forth to the land of Canaan.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Jubilees 11:10 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 2:30).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Jasher* 7:49-51. However, the *Book of Jasher* also states that "Haran was forty-two when he begat Sarai, which was in the tenth year of the life of Abram" (*Jasher* 9:4). That would mean that Haran was born when his father Terach was 38 years old and that he was already 32 years old when his brother Abram was born. Although it is logical that Terach's son Haran was born in Terach's thirties (the average age of his seven predecessors was 31.4 years for their sons), this non-Biblical source cannot be used to overthrow the Biblical testimony as has been demonstrated herein thus far.

⁸³ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1:6:5 [§149] (Whiston, 37). This amazing testimony not only shows us that Josephus reported the exact same tally of years from the Flood to the birth of Abram as our tally in table 2 above (292 years), but it is significant that it demonstrates that his Biblical source that he relied upon was of the same textual transmission as our Masoretic Text; confirming that he did not cite from the chronological absurdities of the Greek Septuagint text, with its extreme variants. He most likely consulted the Library of Caesarea; that great library where Origen and Eusebius later worked in, and where his own manuscripts were deposited and reproduced for future safeguarding. Obviously, there is a straight-line trajectory of the very text canonized by Ezra and the Great Assembly, through the text that Josephus used, right on down to the Masoretic Text of the ninth century CE.

⁸⁴ Philo Judaeus, "On Dreams," 1.9.47 in Yonge, *Works*, 369.

⁸⁵ "A Genesis Commentary" (4Q252, Fr. II, 9-10) in Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* [4th ed.] (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 301-02.

A second translation is given here for comparison:

He gave the land to Abraham His friend. Terah was one hundred and f[o]rty years old when he left Ur of the Chaldees and came to Haran. And Ab[ram was se]venty, and Abram lived in Haran for five years, and after [Abram] left [for] the land of Canaan, (Terah lived sixt[y-five years ...].⁸⁶

Thus, the arithmetic of the Dead Sea Scrolls tells us that Terach was 140 years old when he left Ur, and Abram was then 70 years old ($140 - 70 = 70$). Thus, the *Dead Sea Scrolls* sustains the established tradition of the age of Terach as being 70 years old when his son Abram was born.

7. Eusebius: Eusebius (275?-339), in his *Chronicle*, also confirmed the simple truth about Abram's birth in his father's 70th year:

Thara annorum LXX. gignit Abrahamum: et postea vixit annos CXXXV. usque ad xxxv. annum Isahaki. (Translation: Terah became the father of Abraham when he was 70 years old, and afterward lived for another 135 years, until the 35th year of Isaac).⁸⁷

So, adding 70 years and 135 years for the life of Terach makes him 205 years old when he died. And this was in Isaac's 35th year. Then this means that Isaac was born in Terach's 170th year, which was Abraham's 100th year. Thus, $170 - 100 = 70$ years that Terach was when Abram was born.

8. Albîrûnî: Albîrûnî (973-1048 CE) also dated Abram's birth to the 70th year of Terach.

Terah ben Nahor — till the birth of his son Abraham ... 70.⁸⁸

Conclusion: Can anyone bring forth testimony from any other ancient source that Abram was born when his father was 130 years of age? If so, produce such evidence or be silent. This writer has produced eight ancient authorities who wrote long before the time that Archbishop Ussher had published his *Annals of the World* in 1650. None of these older authorities ever dreamed of espousing any such theory about Abram being born when his father was 130 years old. Also, the idea that Abram didn't leave for the promised land until after his father's death is now declared to be false.

Again, the idea that Terach was 130 years old at the birth of Abram was the invention of Archbishop James Ussher. Even though he was a careful chronologist in many respects, it is obvious that he made the numbers work out for the belief that Jesus was born in the 4000th year since the creation of Adam.⁸⁹ And, in order to sustain such a theory, he had to take advantage of the confusing subtleties of the texts, first and foremost, that has compelled others to subscribe to his ingenious, yet false, proposition. This false theory must now be abandoned once and for all.

With this in mind, before we can resolve this problem, we need to step back and come to grips with one fundamental truth: Abraham represents the most vital link in the sequence of

⁸⁶ "A Genesis Florilegium" (4Q252) in Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1995), 88-89. The author has reviewed the Hebrew text and it is obvious the word seventy has been correctly restored in both translations, and the 145 years of the Vermes translation follows the arithmetic of the Bible, whereas the 140 years of the Eisenman-Wise translation accounts for the five years which apparently the Dead Sea Scroll author stated that Abram remained in Haran.

⁸⁷ Eusebius Pamphili, *Chronicorum Libri Duo*, ed. Alfred Schoene and H. Petermann (Berlin: Weidman, 1875), 1:89. See online at <http://www.attalus.org/translate/eusebius5.html#71> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022). We should also reaffirm here the fact that Eusebius obviously relied upon the same textual tradition as Josephus used, which later became known as the Masoretic Text of the ninth century CE.

⁸⁸ Al-Bîrûnî, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, ed. C. Edward Sachau (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1879), 85.

⁸⁹ Ussher, *Annals*, 779.

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chronological events for the entire Old Testament. This is not a trivial matter to pass by without considerable attention to this vital point.

Genesis 11:26 is elegantly clear in its simplicity: “Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram”⁹⁰ There it is in so insightful terms. Either believe it or reject Biblical testimony! The birth of Abram’s brothers is secondary in importance to the overall chronological scheme of the Bible. Only Abram’s birth is significant. Indeed, we must be compelled to accept this simple truth that resounds so exquisitely and unambiguously from Genesis 11:26 (supported by other ancient testimonies).

One last comment; the biggest reason for eliminating this phantom 60-year period produced by this spurious theory of Archbishop Ussher is that it will be shown in the upcoming chapters that this resolution of this problem will finally let Biblical chronology fall into place like never before.

Finally, we are no longer shackled to a theory that has stood in the way of determining true ancient chronology for half a millennium. If there is one achievement and breakthrough that this book offers, it is this very key to the true understanding of the entire subject of Biblical chronology.⁹¹ And once that is done, then it will be seen that the four thousandth year from Adam was not counted to the birth of Jesus, but to the Crucifixion of Jesus in the year of 30 CE.⁹²

3. From Abram’s Birth to God’s Covenant was a Period of 99 years.

It is important to realize that the Covenant that God made with Abram was in his 99th year, and not his 75th year, as some have maintained.⁹³ As we have seen above, the Promise that God made with Abram originally came to him while he was still living in Ur, “before he moved to Haran” (Acts 7:4).

We do not know when the “Promise” occurred during Abram’s life because no Biblical date is given us for that significant event.⁹⁴ Years later, when Abram was 75, he moved from Haran into the Land of Canaan, but this was not the time that God gave Abram the initial Promise in Ur some years before.

⁹⁰ Author Jan van Tuyl (*New Chronology*, 119) would like us to believe that “there are no Bible texts that either state or infer that Terah was indeed seventy [years old when Abram was born].” This author further proposed that modern Bible translations should not translate what the Scripture says, but to alter the text of Genesis 11:26 to fit his personal pet theory: “It is truly amazing that this number has not been put in the Bible yet; with each new translation and each new print, the error and the misinformation are perpetuated (*ibid*).” So, wait a minute; if on the one hand the figure of 70 does not “either state or infer that Terah was indeed seventy” years old at the birth of Abram, but then if Bible translations change the number to 130, all of a sudden, now it does state and infers that Abram was indeed born when Terah was 130? What kind of logic is this, pray tell? This outrageous Scripture tampering should be vociferously condemned.

⁹¹ The second great break-through in Biblical chronology that this book finally resolves is the true date for the Fall of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar, which will be established as we move along.

⁹² Guggenheimer (*Seder Olam*, xi) believes that “some fathers of the early church wanted to prove that their savior died exactly in the year 4000 of the world, to finish the 2000 ‘years of Torah’ and to start the ‘2000 years of the Messiah.’” Although Guggenheimer certainly hit the nail on the head concerning the significance of true Biblical chronology, unfortunately for us, he didn’t specify as to who those early Church fathers were who stated precisely this belief in exactly those terms (except possibly for the previously cited *Epistle of Barnabas* 13:3-5 and Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 5, 28:3, and a certain Bardesan [after the “Book of the Laws of Countries”] in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 8:734). Of course, this conviction is certainly grounded in the Biblical passages of 2 Pet 3:8, Heb 4:3-11, Rev 20:1-4, Ps 90:4, and Hos 6:2.

⁹³ Archbishop James Ussher also wrongly counted the 430 years from Abram’s 75th year instead of his 100th year (Ussher, *Annals*, 25, 39). Jones agreed with Ussher (*Chronology*, 24-25). This has resulted in the gap between the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses to be (64 years), 25 years less than the actual duration of 89 years.

⁹⁴ The initial Promise could have occurred when Abram was 50 years old (and as brought out herein elsewhere, it appears that major events in Abram’s life occurred in multiples of 25 years).

It is also important to understand that while Abram was still in Ur God made him an unconditional Promise — not a covenant (Gen 12:1-3)! The difference is that Abram's seed would inherit the "Promised Land." Indeed, in this "Promise" it states that the families of the earth would be blessed, but here the wording is not specific enough which points to a singular seed. However, in Genesis 17:1-8, God made a "Covenant" with Abraham when he was 99 years old and specifically told him:

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your seed after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant (Gen 17:6).

So, in trying to understand this significant distinction between a "promise" and a "covenant" we cannot indiscriminately confuse the two terms, because they represent two different matters that occurred at two different times.

Some have maintained that the 430 years before the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai directly points back to the "Promise" that God made with Abram, supposedly when he was 75.⁹⁵ The Rabbis who put together the *Seder Olam*, however, felt that the 430 years goes back to when Abram was 70, and the 400 years are taken from the birth of Isaac.⁹⁶

Others feel that Galatians 3:17 settles the matter. It does not! A close inspection of this verse reveals that there is a clear distinction between the "covenant that was confirmed" with that of the "Promise."

And this I say, that the covenant *that was confirmed* before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance (of the land) be of the law, it is no more of promise, but God gave it (the land) to Abraham by promise (Gal 3:17).

The 430 years point back to a "Covenant that was confirmed" — not to the "Promise." Go back and read it again. There is here a distinction to be made. This verse mentions both a "covenant" and a "promise" — two very distinct words with two very distinct connotations intended by those words. Back in Genesis 12 we read of an unconditional "promise" that God gave to Abram:

I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed (Gen 12:2-3).

At the time of this great promise, Abram was childless — he had no heir. And there is nothing in this verse about a "covenant" between him and God. It is just a promise, and nothing more.

Also, there is a cloud of mystery about when this promise was originally made, as we have carefully investigated above. But then, when we get to Genesis 17, we read of God now establishing a "covenant" with Abram, and this covenant is definitely dated to Abram's 99th year."

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous (Gen 17:1-2).

⁹⁵ Josephus, *Ant.* 2.15.2 [§319] (Whiston, 75); Ussher, *Annals*, 25 [§72]; William Hales, *A New Analysis of Chronology* (London: C. J. G. & F. Rivington, 1830), 1:226; Willis J. Beecher, *The Dated Events of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Sunday School Times Co., 1907), cf. 37, 71; Jan van Tuyl, *New Chronology*, 132.

⁹⁶ *Seder Olam* 1:1 "Creation of Jacob" (Guggenheimer, 8).

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The original “Promise” was unconditional. However, this “covenant” had strings attached to it. God told Abram that there were certain conditions attached to the covenant that he must adhere to. This is an important fact to be understood.

It is at this time of the Covenant that God changed Abram’s name to Abraham. Now Abraham was to “walk before me, and be blameless.” And it is later recorded that Abraham did comply with this condition when it states that Abraham “obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” (Gen 26:5).

And then in Genesis 17:9-14 we read:

God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall circumcise the flesh of you foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. Throughout your generations every male among you shall be circumcised ... So shall my covenant be in your flesh and everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people, he has broken my Covenant.

This covenant not only required physical obedience on the part of Abraham (and a physical act as proof of that obedience, *vis-à-vis*, circumcision), but it also required that all of Abraham’s descendants must follow this physical requirement from that time forward.

The point is that the unconditional “Promise” and the conditional “Covenant” are not to be confused with each other and somehow blended into a reaffirmation of the initial Promise. Even though the conditional covenant (made in Abraham’s 99th year) incorporated elements of the unconditional Promise (made when Abram still lived in Ur of the Chaldees), they are not the same thing.

Genesis 17:3-19 tells us the features of the Covenant:

1. Abraham was to be the father of a multitude of nations;
2. His name would be changed from Abram to Abraham;
3. Abraham would be exceedingly fruitful;
4. Nations and kings would descend from Abraham;
5. God would establish his Covenant between Abraham and his offspring throughout their generations, an everlasting covenant;
6. God would give Abraham and his descendants the Land of Canaan for a permanent possession;
7. God would be the God of Abraham;
8. Abraham and every male descendant had to be circumcised;
9. Abraham’s wife’s name would be changed from Sorai to Sarah;
10. Sarah would be blessed, and a son would be born to her;
11. The name of the son would be called Isaac.

When did this Covenant begin? It began when Abraham circumcised himself (along with his thirteen-year-old son Ishmael) when he was age 99, for it says: “In the selfsame day (*b’etzem ha-yom ha-zeh*) was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son” (Gen 17:26).

Now that we have established that the “Covenant” occurred in Abraham’s 99th year, we are free to proceed on to the next vital link in the overall chronological chain of Biblical events.

4. From Abraham's 99th Year to the Confirmation of Covenant was 1 Year.

The question before us now is whether the 430 years is to be reckoned from when Abraham received the "Covenant" in his 99th year, or from when Isaac was born in Abraham's 100th year. Let's read what the Apostle Paul said again:

And this I say, that the **covenant that was confirmed** before of God in Christ, the law, which was **four hundred and thirty years after**, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance (of the land) be of the law, it is no more of **promise**, but God gave it (the land) to Abraham by **promise** (Gal 3:17).

Do notice the significant words "the covenant that was confirmed." That is the key to resolving this question. The Covenant was made when Abraham was 99, but it was only "confirmed" with the birth of Isaac. Jewish tradition tells us that Isaac was born on the first day of Passover (Nisan 15).⁹⁷ Exodus 12:40-41 tells us that the 430 years were from when the Covenant was confirmed. The Exodus occurred on the first day of Passover — "even the selfsame day" as it was confirmed 430 years earlier with the birth of Isaac.

5. From Abraham's 100th Year to the Exodus was 430 Years.

Exodus 12:40-41 uses the exact same expression given in Genesis 17:26 to lay out an exact time period between the Covenant "that was confirmed" and to the Exodus event.

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was **four hundred and thirty years**. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even **the selfsame day** it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Eternal went out from the land of Egypt (Exod 12:40-41).

Now, why would this passage include the same expression that was used at the circumcision of Abraham, *i.e.*, the "self-same day?" Because it is an obvious reference back to the only datable milestone and major event in the history of the Israelites — the Covenant of Abraham that was "confirmed" in Abraham's 100th year.

The Apostle Paul certainly understood this explicit connection when he said that the Law came 430 years after "the covenant that was confirmed" (Gal 3:16-17). This statement echoes back to what God told Abraham:

... your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will **establish** [confirm] my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him ...But my covenant I will **establish** [*i.e.*, confirm] with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this season next year (Gen 17:19, 21).

God made no covenant with Isaac. It was only upon the birth of Isaac that the covenant that God made with Abraham in his 99th year was "established," *i.e.*, "confirmed" in Abraham's 100th year.⁹⁸

Now the Exodus from Egypt occurred on Nisan 15 on the Hebrew Calendar:

They set out from Ramesses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the Israelites went out boldly in the sight of all the Egyptians (Num 33:3).

⁹⁷ *Rosh Hashana* 11:2 (בְּפֶסַח נוֹלַד יִצְחָק).

⁹⁸ So also, Noel Rude, "When Did the 430 Years Begin?" (Des Moines, Wash.: Association for Christian Development, n.d.). Online at http://www.godward.org/biblical%20research/430%20years.htm#_ftnref1 (accessed Feb. 12, 2017, no longer available as of March 9, 2022).

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Thus, the 430 years must be taken from the birth of Isaac on the first day of Passover to the first day of Passover at the Exodus event.⁹⁹

Was the Sojourn in Egypt 430 Years?

One other point needs to be mentioned. Exodus 12:40 seems to imply that the 430 years referred to the time that the Israelites actually dwelt in Egypt, and not back to the time of Abraham, when it says:

Now the sojourn of the Children of Israel, who lived in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years (Exod 12:40).¹⁰⁰

The word “sojourn” primarily means “seat, assembly, dwelling-place, dwelling, dwellers.”¹⁰¹ However, because we have a time statement associated with it, it could mean the “time of dwelling.”¹⁰² The “time of dwelling” since when? The next verse explains:

And it came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass ... (Exod 12:41).

And as we have shown the term “self-same day” points back to the Abrahamic Covenant when it was confirmed when Abraham was 100 years old.

Also, note that the phrase “who dwelt in Egypt” is merely an adjective clause clarifying which “Children of Israel” are meant — not a statement specifying where the 430 years were to be spent. This conclusion is also confirmed by a leading Biblical chronologist, Floyd Nolen Jones:

Exodus 12:40 does not say that the children of Israel sojourned (or dwelt) 430 years in Egypt. It does say that the sojourn of that particular branch of Abraham’s lineage as traced through Isaac and Jacob, with which we are specifically concerned, was the group which eventually went down to Egypt. In other words, it is a statement defining and identifying with which of Abraham’s lineages the narrative is dealing as Abraham had numerous other lineages. It is through Isaac and Jacob and not by way of Ishmael, Esau, or Abraham’s many offspring by Keturah whom he wed after Sarah died (Genesis 23). The verse is telling us which children of Abraham are being focused upon, not how long they were in Egypt.¹⁰³

Reiterating the words of the Apostle Paul, it is clear that

... the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after ... (Gal 3:17).

Obviously, the Apostle Paul had no problem understanding that the 430-year period reached from Abraham’s 100th year, when the covenant was “confirmed” to the very event of the Exodus itself. Therefore, we are on firm ground with our conclusions thus far, and are free to proceed with confidence on this assessment.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ It should be noted that so far Ussher’s chronology from the birth of Terach to confirmation of the covenant to the Exodus is 35 years too high. Thus his $130 + 75 + 430 = 635$ years, whereas it should be $70 + 100 + 430 = 600$ years. Furthermore, the chronology of the *Seder Olam* yields $70 + 70 + 430 = 570$ years, which is also 30 years too low from the true Biblical chronology established herein.

¹⁰⁰ The Septuagint version arbitrarily adds a phrase here: “and the sojourning of the Children of Israel, while they sojourned in the Land of Egypt **and the Land of Chanaan** ...” But there is clearly no reason for the LXX translators to have added “and the Land of Chanaan,” which does not occur in the Masoretic Text.

¹⁰¹ Hebrew: “moshav,” from the root *YaShav*. See *Hebrew and English Lexicon*, ed. F. Brown, S. Driver, and C. Briggs (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrikson, 2001), 444.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Jones, *Chronology*, 56.

400 Years versus the 430 Years

We have already established that the 430 years is from when the Covenant that was confirmed in Abraham's 100th year to the very year of the Exodus; indeed, to the very day. Many have claimed that the 430 years should start with God's "Promise" when Abram was 75 years of age. They have rationalized that the first 30 years took us to when Isaac was weaned at five years of age.¹⁰⁵ Once again, we are faced with another fanciful theory that flies in the face of the facts that have been securely established thus far.

Many Biblical commentaries and Biblical chronology papers devote a lot of space to discussing the 430 years of Exodus 12:40 versus the 400 years of Genesis 15:13. The 30-year discrepancy has generated a lot of fanciful theories in order to resolve this issue.

It is amazing how many have bought into an argument where there are no direct statements in the Bible that tell us that such a scenario is in any way true. Once again, the culprit in this rationalization is this constant underlying "Christian" attempt to try to force Biblical chronology to conform to the belief that the birth of Jesus fell in the four thousandth year of creation, first postulated by Archbishop James Ussher.¹⁰⁶

The Jewish Explanation of the 400 Years

Jewish chronology, outlined in the *Seder Olam*, took a different approach to the 400/430 discrepancy. It claimed (without basis of fact) that the so-called "Covenant between the Pieces"¹⁰⁷ actually occurred in Abram's 70th year:

Our father Abraham was 70 years old when he was spoken to (by God's presence) at the Covenant Between the Pieces as it is said (Ex. 12:41): "And it was after 430 years," *etc.* After that he was spoken to he returned to Haran, stayed there five years as it is said (Gen. 12:4): "And Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran."¹⁰⁸

So, from this statement alone it would appear that the 430 years were taken from Abram's 70th year, and the 400 years were taken from his 100th year of Abraham when Isaac was born and the Covenant was confirmed.

Again, the *Seder Olam* attests that the 400th year is to be taken from Isaac's birth:

It was said to our forefather Abraham at the Covenant Between the Pieces (Gen. 15:13): "You shall certainly know that your seed will be strangers in a foreign land for 400 years." Whose is the seed? That is Isaac, of whom it is said (Gen. 21:12): "Because Isaac will be called seed for you."¹⁰⁹

Next, the *Seder Olam* states:

On the 15th of Nisan was our father Abraham talked to between the Pieces. On the 15th of Nisan, the angels came to Abraham to announce [the birth of Isaac]

¹⁰⁴ Rude, "When Did the 430 Years Begin?," (online <http://www.godward.org/biblical%20research/430%20years.htm#>, no longer available).

¹⁰⁵ Supporters of this popular theory include Jones, *Chronology*, 58; E. W. Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, Appendix 50, page 51; Anstey, *Romance*, 1:113-18; Mauro, *Wonders*, 33-36; Beecher, *Dated Events*, 38; and countless more papers on the internet.

¹⁰⁶ Ussher, *Annals*, 26-27.

¹⁰⁷ Hebrew: "B'rith bein *he*-batarim."

¹⁰⁸ *Seder Olam* 1:1 "Creation of Jacob" (Guggenheimer, 8).

¹⁰⁹ *Seder Olam* 1:2 "Covenant and Slavery" (Guggenheimer, 37).

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and on the same day the following year was Isaac born as it says (Gen. 18:14): “At that time I shall return to you in the time for life and Sarah will have a son.” On the 15th of Nisan, Israel left Egypt as it is said (Ex. 12:41): “It was at the end of 430 years to the day that the host of the Eternal left the land of Egypt, there is one term of all [of these occurrences].”¹¹⁰

These statements taken together make the position of the *Seder Olam* that the Exodus occurred 400 years after Abraham’s 100th year. But what the Jewish commentators did not have resort to (nor would accept) was the statement of the Apostle Paul, who said:

... the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after ... (Gal 3:17).

The Apostle Paul clearly tied the 430 years to the “Covenant” of Abraham that was confirmed in Abraham’s 100th year at the birth of Isaac. Up until this time, the *Seder Olam* was right on track with Biblical chronology. But unfortunately, at this point, the *Seder Olam* had made a disastrous blunder that destroys their “AM” dates from hence forward and can no longer be a correct instrument for accurately describing the chronology of the ancient Hebrew people.¹¹¹

Dr. Ernest L. Martin’s Explanation of the 400 Year Period

In his book, “*101 Bible Secrets that Christians Do Not Know*,” Dr. Martin believed that the 400-year period should be counted from the time of Abraham’s death when he was 175 years of age until Joshua divided the land.¹¹² That is the correct explanation of the 400-year period, which is adopted in this study. Let us now go back to this verse and re-read it for what it says and for what it does not say:

Then the LORD said to Abram, “Know this for certain, that your offspring shall be aliens in a land that is not theirs, and shall be slaves there, and they shall be oppressed for four hundred years (Gen 15:13).

Now, does this verse say anything about the 400 years beginning with the birth of Isaac? No! There is not a hint that anything like that relates to the 400-year period. And the oppression didn’t even begin until long after Jacob and his family died in Egypt.¹¹³ So, then we are left with the fact that the whole idea was just a theory that was invented by those who carelessly have never read this verse for what it says (including the Jewish rabbis that authored the *Seder Olam*).

The key to understanding the 400 years is right within this verse itself. But we must apply the rules of sound Biblical exegesis, which apparently has not been done by either Jewish nor Christian scholars. The “land that is not theirs” where they will “be slaves” is clearly Egypt. Agreed? But we need to read on because the whole focus turns out to be on the inheritance of the Promised Land:

... but I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve [Egypt], and AFTERWARD they shall come out with great possessions (v.14, emphasis mine).

¹¹⁰ *Seder Olam* 1:5 “Thornbush to Sinai” (Guggenheimer, 58).

¹¹¹ This is the first instance in the *Seder Olam* that a major blunder in its calculations has occurred. Up until this point the *Anno Mundi* years were in complete accord with the Biblical text where no interpretation was involved. However, from here on the *Anno Mundi* time suffers from the loss of these 30 years due to faulty interpretation. The question is will modern Jewry admit the error? No! Their position will always be: “Who are the Gentiles to tell us Jews our own chronology?”

¹¹² Ernest L. Martin, *101 Bible Secrets that Christians Do Not Know* (Portland, Oreg.: Academy for Scriptural Knowledge, 1993), 54-55.

¹¹³ Jacob died in AM 2255 or 1716 BCE. The oppression began after Joseph died in 1662 BCE, 169 years before the Exodus.

Do take into consideration the word “afterward.” What this verse is saying is that the “outcome” (so to speak) will be “with great possessions.” This verse is certainly not referring to the trinkets of gold that the Egyptians gave the Israelites as they departed from Egypt. Indeed, does the loot from the Egyptian people constitute “great possessions?” We must read on to get the full understanding of the context of what is being said here:

As for yourself, you [Abraham] shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back HERE to the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete” (Gen 15:15-16).

Now we must ask, what is the time period of this context? The context here is speaking about the time that is *after* the Exodus — not the Exodus itself. And, realize this, the judgment upon Egypt is *after* the death of Abraham, who was to die in a “good old age.” So, with these new insights, let’s put two and two together.

It seems strange that Biblical chronologists have not looked at the clear context of what is being discussed here, for had they considered the fact that the death of Abraham was being here discussed, then they would have clearly seen immediately that the 400 years should be taken from Abraham’s death — not to the time of the Exodus.

The four generations mentioned in this verse are easy to determine. They tie in with Exodus 6:16-20, which speaks of the four generations of Levi’s family that had left Canaan with his father Jacob and for four generations lived in Egypt, *viz.*, Levi, Kohath, Amram, and Moses.

So, now we are prepared to do some simple arithmetic. We know that the Exodus occurred 430 years after the Covenant was confirmed with Abraham in his 100th year. That would mean that the Exodus occurred 530 years after Abraham’s birth ($100 + 430 = 530$). Then since Abraham lived to the ripe old age of 175 (Gen 25:7-10), we can conclude that the Exodus occurred 355 years after Abraham’s death ($530 - 175 = 355$).

Let us dig into these numbers a little further. Since the Exodus occurred 355 years after the death of Abraham, and Joshua and Caleb were sent to spy the land in the second year after the Exodus (Num 9:1; 13:1-33), then this brings us to 357 years since the death of Abraham. Then 45 years later, Caleb received his inheritance exactly 402 years from Abraham’s death (Josh 14:10). But here is the important fact to understand. Although Caleb was making his statement in the 402nd year of Abraham’s death when he received his own inheritance, the dividing up of inheritances actually began two years earlier (Josh 12). That means that the prophecy of Genesis 15:13 was exactly a 400-year period from Abraham’s death to its fulfillment. And since Abraham died in the year of 1848 BCE, four hundred years later brings us to the year of 1448 BCE as the year that the dividing up of the inheritances. Joshua’s 85th year was two years later, in 1446 BCE.

Thus, finally, the mystery of the 400 years has at last been resolved. The 400 years extended from the death of Abraham to the time when the inheritances began to be divided among the tribes. The oppression of the Israelites did not end with them leaving Egypt and wandering in the dessert for 40 years (“aliens in a land that is not theirs” Gen 15:13). The oppression of the Israelites finally ceased when they took possession of the Land that was promised to them.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Note that it would have been impossible to come to such a precise chronological conclusion as to when the Israelites possessed the “Land” had we adopted the traditional *Seder Olam* explanation of the 400/430 years. The explanation given herein completely accords with the text of Genesis 15:14-16, to which no other explanation satisfies the context of these verses.

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Once again, this book has finally resolved another great chronological mystery that has been misunderstood from time immemorial. This explanation not only confirms that the 400 years are to be taken from Abraham's death to two years before Caleb received his inheritance, but also solidifies the 430 years from Abraham's 100th year to the Exodus.¹¹⁵

6. From the Exodus to Solomon's Year 4 was a Period of 480 Years.

This is the simple reading of 1 Kings 6:1 which gives us a direct statement providing us with this important span of time:

In the **four hundred eightieth year** after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD (1 Kgs 6:1).¹¹⁶

Some people believe that the 480 years should be taken inclusively, *i.e.*, should be calculated using the figure of 479 years instead of the full round figure of 480 years.¹¹⁷ But such a subtlety flies in the face of the marked precision of equating Solomon's year four with the 480th year of the Exodus; a subtlety that seems to have been lost on just about every other chronologist from time immemorial. Are we to subtract a year off every total number of years that are given throughout Scripture? This period, of course, includes the period of the Joshua/Judges, which will be addressed and straightened out as we move along.

7. From Solomon's 4th Year to the End of His Reign was 36 Years.

Solomon reigned a total of 40 years:

The time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. Solomon slept with his ancestors and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him" (1 Kgs 11:42-43).

Since the 480th year from the Exodus to Solomon's fourth year is the next important link in the Biblical chain of events, it is only a matter of subtracting $40 - 4 = 36$, to arrive at this correct period of time from this event.

8. From the Death of Solomon to the Fall of Judah is Exactly 390 years.

Many chronologists total the years of Judah's Kingdom at face value as being 393 years.¹¹⁸ But they have miscalculated this total, not recognizing a very significant co-regency.

Notice 2 Kings 8:17. It states that Jehoram reigned a total of 8 years. However, the previous verse definitely implies a co-regency with his father, Jehoshaphat, when it states:

And in the **fifth** year of Joram, the son of Ahab, King of Israel, Jehoshaphat being **then** King of Judah, Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, began to reign (1 Kgs 8:16).

This verse clearly states that Jehoram became a king while "Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah." How could Biblical chronologists have missed such an important statement as this?

¹¹⁵ Such an exacting harmony in these figures not only reinforces the chronology that has been established thus far, but offers an amazing confirmation in the material with which we are dealing.

¹¹⁶ Some have questioned the veracity of the 480 period as being too short to account for all the years outlined in the *Book of Judges*. The chronology of the Judges will be finally settled in an upcoming chapter.

¹¹⁷ Rodger C. Young, "When Did Solomon Die?," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 46:4 (Dec 2003): 602, n. 16.

¹¹⁸ For example, Ernest L. Martin, "The Basics of Old Testament History," online at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p081101.htm> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

Jehoshaphat reigned 25 years (1 Kgs 22:42). Joram of Israel began to reign in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (1 Kgs 3:1). Ahaziah succeeded his father Jehoram as king of Judah in the 12th year of Joram, king of Israel (1 Kgs 8:25). But wait a minute. Shouldn't this have been the 28th year of Jehoshaphat? No, Jehoshaphat only reigned 25 years. The 3-year discrepancy can only be accommodated by making Jehoram co-regent with his father, Jehoshaphat. Thus, Jehoram's 8 years must be reduced to only 5 years of sole rule in the total stack-up in the kings of Judah.

Thus, the figure of 390 years is derived by simply totaling up all the lengths of reigns of the kings of Judah until Jerusalem was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar:

The 390 Years of the Kings of Judah

Table 3:

| Name of King | Years | Reference |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Rehoboam | 17 | 2 Chr 12:13 |
| Abijam | 3 | 1 Kgs 15:2 |
| Asa | 41 | 1 Kgs 15:10 |
| Jehoshaphat | 25 | 1 Kgs 22:42 |
| Jehoram | 5 ^a | 2 Kgs 8:16-17 |
| Ahaziah | 1 | 2 Kgs 8:26 |
| Athaliah (Queen) | 6 | 2 Kgs 11:3 |
| Joash | 40 | 2 Kgs 12:1 |
| Amaziah | 29 | 2 Kgs 14:2 |
| Azariah (Uzziah) | 52 | 2 Kgs 15:2 |
| Jotham | 16 | 2 Kgs 15:33 |
| Ahaz | 16 | 2 Kgs 16:2 |
| Hezekiah | 29 | 2 Kgs 18:2 |
| Manasseh | 55 | 2 Kgs 21:1 |
| Amon | 2 | 2 Kgs 21:19 |
| Josiah | 31 | 2 Kgs 22:1 |
| Jehoahaz (3 months) | 0 | 2 Kgs 23:31 |
| Jehoiakim | 11 | 2 Kgs 23:36 |
| Jehoiachin (3 months) | 0 | 2 Kgs 24:8 |

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Table 3:

| Name of King | Years | Reference |
|--------------|-------|-------------|
| Zedekiah | 11 | 2 Kgs 24:18 |
| Total | 390 | |

a. This verse actually says 8 years but must be adjusted down to 5 years based upon a co-reign of three years as explained above.

This 390-year period has also been seen as coinciding exactly with the 390 days that the prophet Ezekiel was to lie on his side, each day representing a year of Israel's iniquity:

This is a sign for the house of Israel. Then lie on your left side, and place the punishment of the house of Israel upon it; you shall bear their punishment for the number of the days that you lie there. For I assign to you a number of days, three hundred ninety days, equal to the number of the years of their punishment; and so you shall bear the punishment of the house of Israel. When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the punishment of the house of Judah; forty days I assign you, one day for each year (Ezek 4:3-6).¹¹⁹

Now, of course, some will argue that the coincidental 390 day/year prophecy of Ezekiel does not apply in the overall chronological stack-up from the time of the division of the Kingdom of Israel to the final destruction of the Kingdom of Judah under Nebuchadnezzar. But why? Because it is seen as a prophecy to the "House of Israel," not to the "House of Judah." Yet, we must realize that Ezekiel was given this sign immediately before the fall of the House of Judah. This would certainly make this 390-year period an appropriate ending to his prophetic message at that time.

Also, it would further punctuate the significance of the Jeroboam's rebellion at the beginning of this period. After all, short of a direct statement that the divided Kingdom lasted 390 years, it is obvious that there is no better way of confirming this overall tabulation that we have herein established above. Indeed, what better confirmation of our independent calculation would there be other than this prophecy?¹²⁰

Summary: From the Creation of Adam to Fall of Judah

Thus far, it has been found that Biblically there is an unbroken chronological link from the creation of Adam to the Fall of Judah. This overall time period can now be summarized by adding up all if the periods as follows:

¹¹⁹ Notice that 40 years are applied to Judah. Jones believes that this represents the period from the commencement of Jeremiah's prophecies in the 13th year of Josiah (627 BCE) to the 9th year of Zedekiah, when the final siege of Jerusalem began (Jones, *Chronology*, 133, n. 1). Jones' error is that the fortieth year ended the siege in Zedekiah's 11th year in 587 BCE.

¹²⁰ In one sense, one could ignore the 390 day/years of Ezekiel's prophecy, if one so chooses, because this would still not change the independent conclusion that 390 years expired for the length of the divided kingdom based upon the total lengths of the reigns of the Judahite kings when correctly analyzed.

Summary of Years from Adam to Fall of Jerusalem:

Table 4:

| Time Period | Years |
|--|--------------|
| 1. From Creation of Adam to the Flood of Noah | 1656 |
| 2. From the Flood to the birth of Abram | 292 |
| 3. From birth of Abram to Covenant with “Abraham” | 99 |
| 4. From Covenant (promised) to birth of Isaac (confirmed) | 1 |
| 5. From birth of Isaac to the Exodus | 430 |
| 6. From Exodus to the 4 th year of Solomon | 480 |
| 7. From 4 th year of Solomon to the Division of the Kingdom | 36 |
| 8. From the Division of the Kingdom to the Fall of Jerusalem | 390 |
| Total | 3384 |

We now (*at last!*) have the exact number of years that the Bible itself gives us for establishing the correct chronology from Adam to the Fall of Judah. Why has this been so hard to determine down through the ages to establish? Is it because it was only allotted to the end time that this amazing truth would be revealed? We now have nothing less than the biggest breakthrough in chronological studies of all time. And the reasons are 1) because it is not saddled with the false assumptions of Ussher’s chronology; 2) It is not encumbered with the false chronology of the *Seder Olam*, and; 3) it is totally free from the false modern constructions of the chronologies of ancient Egypt and Assyria. Yes, we can now finally and boldly move forward to re-establish a true Biblical chronology once and for all.

After the Fall of Jerusalem, the Bible no longer provides us with a clear path to a secular dating system. How do we bridge that gap? It appears that we are forced to look to secular sources to connect us with Biblical sources. And the source that we must first address is the so-called “*Canon of Ptolemy*.” Let us investigate this intriguing source now before we move forward since this is a source that has been so relied upon by chronologists from time immemorial. Indeed, if this source is not correct, then, pray tell, where else are we to turn to for the truth?

Therefore, the year that Jerusalem fell is critical for establishing a Biblical chronology that links up with secular history. This, of course, involves the establishment of an absolute date for the fall of the Kingdom of Judah. However, in order to establish such an exact date, it requires us to dig into some of the most intricate issues in the entire study of Biblical chronology.¹²¹ But it is an exciting journey that we now embark upon. It will open your eyes as never before.

¹²¹ Before we get under way, consider the fact that there are legions of literature surrounding the date for the Fall of Jerusalem, yet there remains no real consensus among scholars themselves. Since the dates proposed by Near Eastern history specialists have been narrowed down to 587 BCE or 586 BCE, the real focus will be the choice between those two dates. That choice is not an easy one but one that deserves an in-depth treatment here before we can be confident of that decision.



CHAPTER 3

THE LINK BETWEEN BIBLICAL AND SECULAR CHRONOLOGY

*I*N ORDER TO CONNECT BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY TO SECULAR HISTORY IT IS NECESSARY to find an accurate fixed date on the BCE/CE time scale that must be accepted universally by specialists in the field and by serious students of history alike. This is no small task. It is for this reason that we must delve into the most complicated discussions on the subject in order to thoroughly understand that all the issues have been correctly dealt with in this study.

As we have established in the last chapter, Biblical chronology brings us all the way down to the last year of the last king of Judah, King Zedekiah. But now the Biblical references dry up. It is as if Scripture brought us this far but then left us hanging, forcing us to now turn to external references in order to join up with secular world history.

Fortunately, Biblical chronology brought us the very era where there is an abundance of evidence to put on the table to sort through. Indeed, there are many chronological references in the Babylonian records concerning the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, that will help us to continue in our quest of establishing this most needed connection. But, unfortunately, there has been much scholarly debate as to how this data should be interpreted.

The problem is that in recent times there has been little agreement on the correct year that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem. Most dates hover around anytime between 591-585 BCE. Obviously, the scholars who proposed such dates were dependent upon the *Canon of Ptolemy* (or sources which Ptolemy depended upon). Outside of this range of dates, we have the extremes of the Jehovah's Witnesses on the high side and the Jewish work known as the *Seder Olam* on the low side — a staggering difference of some 183 years. Today, among Biblical scholars, the debate has only narrowed down to between 586 and 587 BCE. But for comparison reasons, let us look at what has been proposed down through the ages by ancient and modern authorities.¹²²

Proposed Dates for the Fall of Jerusalem

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| The Jehovah Witnesses | 607 BCE ¹²³ |
| Sir John Marsham (1602 – 1685) | 606 BCE ¹²⁴ |
| Eusebius (260? – 340) | 591 BCE ¹²⁵ |
| Jerome (347 – 420) | 591 BCE ¹²⁶ |
| Joseph Scaliger (1540 – 1609) | 591 BCE ¹²⁷ |
| Dionysius Petavius (1583 – 1652) | 589 BCE ¹²⁸ |
| James Ussher, (1581 – 1656) | 588 BCE ¹²⁹ |
| Humphrey Prideaux (1648 – 1724) | 588 BCE ¹³⁰ |
| Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727) | 588 BCE ¹³¹ |
| Henry Browne (1804 – 1875) | 588 BCE ¹³² |
| Josephus (37 – 100) | 587 BCE ¹³³ |
| James Anderson (1680? -1739) | 587 BCE ¹³⁴ |
| Arthur Bedford (1668 – 1745) | 587 BCE ¹³⁵ |
| John Kennedy (1698 – 1782) | 587 BCE ¹³⁶ |
| William Betham (1749 – 1839) | 587 BCE ¹³⁷ |

¹²² What is striking in this list is the fact that back at a time prior to the discovery of pertinent Babylonian cuneiform tablets, which described the events of Nebuchadnezzar, there were at least ten authorities in this list (including Josephus) who had proposed the year of 587 BCE for the date of the Fall of Jerusalem, the date that will be proven herein to be the actual year for the Fall of Jerusalem.

¹²³ *Aid to Bible Understanding* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Society, 1971), 327, 328, 330.

¹²⁴ Sir John Marsham, *Chronicus Canon Aegyptiacus, Ebraicus, Graecus & Disquisitiones* (London: Leonardi Strick, 1696), 532. Marsham placed the destruction of the Temple in the 141st year of the Era of Nabonassar. Therefore, 747 - 141 = 606. (The author is in possession of an original copy of Marsham's rare book).

¹²⁵ Reported in Jack Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, rev. ed. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1998), 190 citing Rudolf Helm, *Eusebius Chronik* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1924), 7:15, 17.

¹²⁶ Finegan, *Handbook* (1964), 185.

¹²⁷ Joseph Scaliger, *Opus Novum De Emendatione Temporum* (Paris: printed by Mamert Pattison for Sébastien Nivelles, 1583), 219. Scaliger placed the destruction of the Temple in the second year of the 47th Olympiad. which equates to: $777 - ((4 \times (47 - 1)) + 2) = 591$ BCE.

¹²⁸ As reported in William Hales, *A New Analysis of Chronology, etc.* (London, C. J. G. & F. Rivington, 1830), 1:227.

¹²⁹ Ussher, *Annals*, 104.

¹³⁰ Humphrey Prideaux, *The Old and New Testaments Connected* (Boston: Cummings & Hillard, 1823), 1:173; 2:545.

¹³¹ Isaac Newton, *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* (London: J. Tonson & T. Longman, 1728), 38.

¹³² Henry Browne, *Ordo Saeculorum: A Treatise on the Chronology of the Holy Scriptures* (London: John W. Parker, 1844), 170, 397.

¹³³ *Josephus*, Whiston, 866. Author's note: It is truly noteworthy that Josephus came up with the exact total of years from the "temple's conflagration ... Thence to the Passover, on the first year of the Christian era." His reckoning was a total of 587 and 2/3 years. What??? Are you kidding me? Astonishingly, Josephus perfectly established the correct date a century before Ptolemy and fifteen centuries before Archbishop Ussher. This author has never seen anyone comment on this extraordinary fact. How could so many chronologists down through time have missed such an incredibly accurate chronological determination? This needs to be investigated further because if true, this is no small revelation.

¹³⁴ James Anderson, *Royal Genealogies* (London: James Bettenham, 1732), 77.

¹³⁵ Arthur Bedford, *The Scripture Chronology Demonstrated by Astronomical Calculation* (London: Printed for James and John Knapton, etc., 1730), 707.

¹³⁶ John Kennedy, *A Complete System of Astronomical Chronology, Unfolding the Scriptures, etc.* (London: E. Allen, 1762), 267. Kennedy placed the Fall of Jerusalem in the 160th year of the Era of Nabonassar (747 - 160 = 587).

The Link between Biblical and Secular Chronology

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| John Lemprière (1765 – 1824) | 587 BCE ¹³⁸ |
| Henry Fynes Clinton (1781 – 1852) | 587 BCE ¹³⁹ |
| Smith B. Goodenow (1817-1897) | 587 BCE ¹⁴⁰ |
| Robert Anderson (1841 – 1918) | 587 BCE ¹⁴¹ |
| John Bright (1908-1995) | 587 BCE ¹⁴² |
| Henri Cazelles | 587 BCE ¹⁴³ |
| John Jackson (1686–1763) | 586 BCE ¹⁴⁴ |
| William Hales (1747 – 1831) | 586 BCE ¹⁴⁵ |
| Richard S. Coxe (1792-1865) | 586 BCE ¹⁴⁶ |
| Adolf Kamphausen (1829-1909) | 586 BCE ¹⁴⁷ |
| Willis J. Beecher (1838-1912) | 586 BCE ¹⁴⁸ |
| Martin Anstey (published 1913) | 586 BCE ¹⁴⁹ |
| Samuel B. Mercer (1863-1912) | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁰ |
| William S. Auchincloss (1842-1928) | 586 BCE ¹⁵¹ |
| Henry H. Halley (1874-1965) | 586 BCE ¹⁵² |
| Jan van Tuyl | 586 BCE ¹⁵³ |
| J. Maxwell Miller & John H. Hayes | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁴ |
| W. S. La Sor | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁵ |
| Ormand Edwards | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁶ |
| Philip J. King | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁷ |

¹³⁷ William Betham, *Genealogical Tables of the Sovereigns of the World* (London: W. Bennett, 1792), (no page), Table 17.

¹³⁸ John Lemprière, *A Classical Dictionary* (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1919), xii.

¹³⁹ Clinton, *Epitome*, 134-35.

¹⁴⁰ Smith B. Goodenow, *Chronology Carefully Unfolded* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1896), 117.

¹⁴¹ Robert Anderson, *The Coming Prince* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1881), 205-7.

¹⁴² John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Louisville, Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 330.

¹⁴³ Henri Cazelles, “587 ou 586?” in *The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth* (Philadelphia: ASOR, 1983), 427-35.

¹⁴⁴ John Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities* (London: Published by the author, 1752), 1:189.

¹⁴⁵ Hales, *New Analysis*, 1:81.

¹⁴⁶ Richard S. Coxe, (1792-1865) and John Walker (1732-1807). *A New Critical Pronouncing Dictionary of the English Language ... etc.*, (Burlington, N. J.: D. Allinson & Co., 1813), n.p.

¹⁴⁷ Adolf Kamphausen, *Die Chronologie der hebräischen Könige* (Bonn: Verlag von Max Cohen & Sohn, 1883), 32.

¹⁴⁸ Beecher, *Dated Events*, 157.

¹⁴⁹ Anstey, *Romance*, 1:226.

¹⁵⁰ Samuel A. B. Mercer, *Extra-Biblical Sources for Hebrew and Jewish History* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1913), 57.

¹⁵¹ William S. Auchincloss, *Standard Chronology of the Holy Bible* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1922), 48.

¹⁵² Henry H. Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook: An Abbreviated Bible Commentary*, 24th ed., (Grand Rapids, Regency Reference Library, b. 1965), 228, 372.

¹⁵³ Jan van Tuyl, *New Chronology*, 408.

¹⁵⁴ J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes. *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah* (London, Westminster John Knox Press, 1986), 392.

¹⁵⁵ W. S. La Sor, “Jerusalem” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 2:1016.

¹⁵⁶ Ormond Edwards, “The Year of Jerusalem’s Destruction. 2 Addaru 597 B.C. Reinterpreted,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 104:1 (1992): 101-106.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| John Day | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁸ |
| Steve Walton | 586 BCE ¹⁵⁹ |
| Iain Provan, <i>et. al.</i> | 586 BCE ¹⁶⁰ |
| Lester Grabbe | 586 BCE ¹⁶¹ |
| Adam Rutherford | 585 BCE ¹⁶² |
| Malcolm MacDonald | 567 BCE ¹⁶³ |
| William Thurman (1864) | July 7, 547 BCE ¹⁶⁴ |
| Ernest L. Martin (1980) | 527 BCE ¹⁶⁵ |
| Tertullian (<i>ca.</i> 155 – 240) | 507 BCE ¹⁶⁶ |
| Philip Mauro (1859-1952) | 507 BCE ¹⁶⁷ |
| E. W. Bullinger (1837-1913) | 477 BCE ¹⁶⁸ |
| <i>Seder Olam</i> , 160 CE | 424 BCE ¹⁶⁹ |

This is a list that could go on and on, but at least it gives us a flavor of what has been proposed down through the centuries concerning the most significant date in Biblical history.¹⁷⁰ Most of the dates, it should be observed, proposed by many of these authors do not attempt to critically deal with modern discoveries of ancient Babylonian astronomical tablets, nor the authenticated account of the *Canon of Kings* preserved by the Astronomer Ptolemy. Therefore, before moving on it is necessary to address this important historical king list.

¹⁵⁷ Phillip J. King, "Jerusalem" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3:757.

¹⁵⁸ John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, Ltd., 2002), 110, 183.

¹⁵⁹ Steve Walton, "Jerusalem" in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, Abingdon Press: 2009), 3:250.

¹⁶⁰ Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, Tremper Longman III (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 382 [fn 12]: "Debate exists over whether 587 or 586 was the year in which Jerusalem fell. For a recent survey and interesting solution, see Edwards, "Jerusalem's Destruction," 101-6. We shall refer to the date in what follows as 586 B.C."

¹⁶¹ Lester L. Grabbe, *Ancient Israel* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2007), 223.

¹⁶² Adam Rutherford, *Treatise on Bible Chronology* (London: The Institute of Pyramidology, 1957), 322.

¹⁶³ Malcolm MacDonald, *Harmony of Ancient History, and Chronology of the Egyptians and Jews* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1891), 166.

¹⁶⁴ William C. Thurman, *Our Bible Chronology Established* (Philadelphia: John Goodyear, 1864), 32, 113.

¹⁶⁵ Ernest L. Martin, *The Home Study Course* (Portland, Oreg.: Academy for Scriptural Knowledge, 1985), 23.

¹⁶⁶ Tertullian, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 3:158, 159, 168.

¹⁶⁷ Mauro, *Wonders*, 89.

¹⁶⁸ Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, Appendix 50, 72.

¹⁶⁹ Kantor, *Jewish Time Line Encyclopedia*, 57.

¹⁷⁰ Even though this list surveyed by this author is not a comprehensive one, it does give us a glimpse of the best efforts of prominent conclusions of most Biblical and secular chronologists/historians in the past. But in reviewing this list isn't it striking that eleven of the proposed dates for the Destruction of Judah are 587 BCE and eighteen are proposed for 586 BCE. So, admittedly, the 586 BCE date is the date that has become the favorite for most scholars in recent years just by this little survey. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this author was also one of those who once strongly supported the seemingly convincing arguments of those who proposed the 586 BCE date (based mostly on the arguments of Thiele and Malamat) as the correct date for the Destruction. But now, upon further research, it has become apparent that the arguments for the 586 BCE date, although once seemingly convincing, cannot be sustained by recent facts. This is why the matter needs this full investigation because the Thiele and Malamat arguments can no longer be sustained by this new research presented herein. It is therefore hoped that the 586 BCE proponents who read this book take seriously this new evidence and will judge the facts that support the date of 587 BCE for the destruction of Judah and Solomon's Temple.

The Canon of Ptolemy: Can it be Relied Upon?

First of all, it must be stated here that the most important question that we have to address before we can move forward in this discussion is whether the so-called “*Canon of Ptolemy*” can be actually relied upon as a proper vehicle to connect secular dates advanced in this list with Biblical chronology. Indeed, what more crucial question could there be at this juncture? Why? Well, for one, the *Canon* has been the basis for ancient chronology since it was first published around 150 CE. If we did not have that extremely important work, the task of connecting Biblical with secular chronology would be far more difficult, but not impossible.

Consider the fact that after the final Fall of the Kingdom of Judah to the Babylonians and the destruction of the Temple of Solomon, the Biblical narrative no longer provides us a clear cut path chronologically in its consistent “AM” dating from the time of Adam until that destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.

That being said, so where do we turn to for reliable information? Obviously, we have no other choice in order to somehow connect the chronology of the last days of the Judean kings with the secular Babylonian and Persian chronologies than to turn to secular sources.¹⁷¹ So, how do we know if the chronology of these gentile kingdoms presented in the *Canon* is in any way accurate in order for us to connect Biblical and secular chronology? Fortunately, it appears that at this time in history there arose Greek historians, such as Herodotus, and many others, who had access to the ancient records of the kingdoms in question and preserved for us an accurate account during the Persian and Greek periods. But most importantly for us today, there have been thousands of Babylonian cuneiform tablets that confirm the history of classical historians.

Who was Ptolemy?

So, who was “Ptolemy?” What we know about him is that his full name was Claudius Ptolemæus who lived *ca.* 70-161 CE. He composed an astronomical work referred to as the *Almagest* (based on his previous work entitled *Mathematike Syntaxis*).¹⁷² This *Canon* (referred to as the *Handy Tables*¹⁷³) was a list of ancient kings and their dates of reigns that were tacked onto his astronomical treatise as a reference to the dates that he cited within his monograph. The king list begins with the Babylonian ruler Nabonassar in 747 BCE and is carried right on down through the Persian kings, the Greek rulers, and finally ending with the Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius (138-61 CE), who was the Roman Emperor during the time of Ptolemy.

This list of reigns, beginning with the year 1 of Nabonassar, a vassal king of Babylon under Assyria, covers a little over 900 years down to Ptolemy’s day. It includes the series of Babylonian and Persian kings, Alexander the Great and his Macedonian successors in Egypt (the Ptolemies), and the Roman emperors down to Antoninus Pius. With each name is given the length of the reign and the cumulative total from the year 1 of Nabonassar — beginning, according to the Egypt-

¹⁷¹ Even those who see the Seventy Weeks Prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 as a chronological link for establishing Jesus as the Messiah are forced to rely on secular chronology in order to do so. So, the question then becomes, what source in history are we to rely upon, if not the *Canon of Ptolemy*?

¹⁷² Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemæus), “The Almagest,” trans. R. Catesby Taliaferro, in *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 16: *Ptolemy, Copernicus, Kepler*, ed. John Maynard Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1952).

¹⁷³ Alexander Jones, “Ptolemy’s *Handy Tables*,” *Journal for the History and Astronomy*, 2017 (48), 238-41.

tian calendar, from noon on February 26, 747 B.C. (in astronomical terms, -746, since astronomers use a year 0 in place of 1 B.C.).¹⁷⁴

This “*Canon*” has been accepted by chronologists from time immemorial because it is anchored in verifiable celestial data. It begins with what is termed as the so-called “Era of Nabonassar.”

This era is famous in astronomy, **having been in use from the very time of its origin**; for the observations of eclipses which were collected in Chaldea by Callisthenes, the general of Alexander, and transmitted by him to Aristotle, were for the greater part referred to the beginning of the reign of Nabonassar, founder of the kingdom of the Babylonians. **It is the basis of the famous Canon of kings, also called Mathematical Canon, preserved to us in the works of Ptolemy, which before the astonishing discoveries at Nineveh, was the sole authentic monument of Assyrian and Babylonian history known to us.** The epoch from which it is reckoned is precisely determined by numerous celestial phenomena recorded by Ptolemy, and corresponds to Wednesday at mid-day, the 26th of February of the year 747 before Christ.¹⁷⁵

More recently Peter James underscores the monumental impact of the *Canon*:

The historical thread between the classical and ancient Babylonian worlds was thinly stretched, but not broken. Indeed, a Greek astronomical treatise from as late as the 2nd century AD contains one of the most valuable chronological sources ever discovered, known as the ‘Canon of Ptolemy’. Claudius Ptolemy, the famous Greek mathematician and geographer, recorded for posterity the names and reign-lengths of the kings of Babylon from Alexander the Great, who died there in 323 BC, back to Nabonassar, who ascended the throne in 747 BC.... The sources available to him, now lost, provided detailed records of lunar eclipses observed by the ancient Babylonians, which Ptolemy dated according to an era beginning with the accession of King Nabonassar.¹⁷⁶

Thus, the so-called *Canon of Ptolemy* has been accepted as an authentic source for reconstructing dates of ancient kings and nations for centuries by most chronologists in the past. Today, the majority of chronologists and historians still accept this work as the reliable go-between with Biblical and secular chronology. H. Grattan Guinness went so far as to place the Canon on par with Scripture itself by proclaiming:

In the existence of this invaluable work, and in its preservation as a precious remnant of antiquity, **the hand of Providence can clearly be traced. The same Divine care which raised up Herodotus and other Greek historians to carry on the records of the past** from the point to which they had been brought by the writings of the prophets at the close of the Babylonish captivity; — **the Providence which raised up Josephus**, the Jewish historian, at the termination of New Testament history, to record the fulfillment of prophecy in the destruction of Jerusalem, — **raised up also Ptolemy in the important interval which extended from Titus to Hadrian**, that of the completion of Jewish desolation, to record the chronology of the nine previous centuries, and to associate it in such a way with the revolutions of the solar system as to permit of the most searching demonstration of its truth.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, 2^d ed., rev. (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1970), 27-29.

¹⁷⁵ William L. R. Cates, “Chronology” in *The Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed. (New York: The Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1910), 6:315.

¹⁷⁶ Peter James, *Centuries of Darkness* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 265.

¹⁷⁷ H. Grattan Guinness, *Creation Centered In Christ* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1896), 292-93 (emphasis the author’s). See also Leo Depuydt, “‘More Valuable than All Gold’: Ptolemy’s Royal Canon and Babylonian Chronology,” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, 47 (1995): 101-06.

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But if indeed the “hand of Providence” was behind the preservation of this invaluable *Canon*, then should we not expect the “Canon” to be as accurate as if it were at the level of Scripture itself? That is an important question that we must be confident in answering before assuming its legitimacy. However, the only thing standing in the way of such a conclusion is that there have been a minority few who have criticized the Canon as being a work of fiction and thus should not be the basis for establishing a chronology that fits in with the that of Scripture. So, it is important that we look at some of the objections of modern critics, one for example — a scholar that this author has known personally for a long time — Dr. Ernest L. Martin.

The Objections of Dr. Ernest L. Martin

The reason that this author brings to the forefront objections by Dr. Ernest L. Martin (1932-2002) is that he has personally known “Dr. Martin” since 1967 when I was at Ambassador College in Brickwood, England, and have admired his most insightful research in many areas of Biblical studies. His dissertation on the *Design of the Holy Scriptures* was brilliant.¹⁷⁸ His explanation for the date of the birth of Jesus was spot on.¹⁷⁹ But in his rejection of the *Canon of Ptolemy* as a source for ancient chronology, this is a matter in which I cannot disagree with more.¹⁸⁰

One must surely read Martin’s essay online cited herein because it represents one of the latest attacks on the *Canon* including the very same old arguments that have long ago been defeated. One has to admit that Dr. Martin makes what appears on the surface to be poignant points. But reader beware; his disputes must be read with critical discretion. Martin cites questionable dates throughout his work as if they were legitimate, but leaves out many source citations and therefore cannot be verified. And he certainly has gotten Josephus’ date for the first destruction of Jerusalem 52 years too late. This alone begs the question as to his reliability as a legitimate contributor to the discussion of Biblical and ancient chronology.

Martin admits that he was merely following the works of Martin Anstey,¹⁸¹ who in turn had followed the work of the noted author of the monumental *Companion Bible*, E. W. Bullinger.¹⁸² Both Anstey and Bullinger were strong critics of the *Canon of Ptolemy*.¹⁸³

Martin’s main complaint was that the lunar eclipses referred to by Ptolemy were actually fakes, based on the work of another critic of Ptolemy’s Canon, Robert Newton’s, *The Crime of*

¹⁷⁸ Ernest L. Martin, “Design and Development of the Holy Scripture” (Ph.D. diss., Ambassador College Graduate School of Theology, 1965, 1971).

¹⁷⁹ Dr. Martin placed the birth of Jesus on September 11, 3 BCE (Ernest L. Martin, *The Star that Astonished the World* [Portland, Oreg.: ASK Publications, 1996], 228). Martin’s date unfortunately is based on the reconstructed Babylonian calendar of Richard A. Parker, and Waldo H. Dubberstein (*Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.-A.D. 75* [Brown University Studies, 19. Providence: Brown University Press, 1956], 45), which he elsewhere rejects, was off by one day according to the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar that this author has advanced in Paul R. Finch, *Beyond Acts: New Perspectives in New Testament History* (CreateSpace, Independent Publishing Platform, Oct 22, 2016), 344.

¹⁸⁰ Dr. Ernest L. Martin, “Chronological Falsehoods,” 1998 (online at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p980304.htm>, (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

¹⁸¹ Anstey, *Romance*, 18-27.

¹⁸² Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, Appendix 86, 120-24.

¹⁸³ Martin also believed that there were 393 years for the kings of Judah, when actually there were only 390 years as has been established herein.

Claudius Ptolemy.¹⁸⁴ But there are far more reasons to accept the *Canon of Ptolemy* than what Martin cites in this essay, as will be shown.

Here is another strange thing about Martin's criticism. After quoting Daniel 9:1-2 mentioning the first year of the king Darius the Mede, Martin then remarks:

Here was Daniel near the end of that 70-year period. In fact, if you want to know the exact number of years left, there were 8 more years left when Daniel got this prophecy here. Back in Daniel 6 at the beginning, it says that Darius the Mede actually took over the kingdom when it was 62 years in existence.¹⁸⁵

What? Where on earth did Martin come up with the idea that there were eight more years left of the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy?¹⁸⁶ This is crazy! Yet, Martin did not give an actual chapter and verse quote from Daniel (for some curious and unfortunate reason); he merely stated "back in Daniel 6 at the beginning." Well, this author has read Daniel 6 "back in the beginning" and there is not one word of any sort to what Dr. Martin was referring to.¹⁸⁷ The truth is that there is no reference in chapter 6 of Daniel (nor any other chapter in the *Book of Daniel*) that Darius the Mede "took over the kingdom when it was 62 years in existence." Therefore, one has to seriously ask what on earth was Dr. Martin referring to?¹⁸⁸

Martin also complained about the paucity of the number of lunar eclipses that Ptolemy selected:

The first thing that must be asked is why Ptolemy gave only seven eclipses embracing a 400 year period. Any scientific encyclopedia will inform a person that in any ten year period there are on the average 15 lunar eclipses observable from earth. Out of a 400 year period (the time of the Babylonian and Persian Empires) there were over 600 lunar eclipses visible on earth. It is true that not all of these could be observed from the region of Babylon (the only area Ptolemy was concerned with in his astronomical canon), yet it was possible for the Chaldean to witness over 300 of them. But of these 300 + eclipses, Ptolemy was able to muster only seven to support his chronological system.¹⁸⁹

Is this really an objection? The number seven in the Bible is the number of completeness.¹⁹⁰ If those seven eclipses are accurate, what more proof do we need? Dr. Martin's objection misses the point of all the other celestial evidence given in Ptolemy's *Almagest*. Let Edwin R. Thiele's profound discussion on Ptolemy's accuracy explain why, which still resounds as intensely as it did when he first articulated it back in 1965:

Over eighty solar, lunar, and planetary positions, with their dates, are recorded in the *Almagest* **which have been verified by modern astronomers**. The details concerning eclipses are given with such minuteness as to leave no question concerning the exact identification of the particular phenomenon referred to, and making possible the most positive verification. Early in the canon, for instance, its correctness can be checked by an eclipse of the moon which took place in the first year of Pompadours, on the night of Thoth 29/30, which began in Babylon

¹⁸⁴ Robert R. Newton, *The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977).

¹⁸⁵ Ernest L. Martin, "New Discoveries in Chronology and Prophecy," online at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p021102.htm> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

¹⁸⁶ Jer 25:1-11; 29:1-10; Dan 9:1-2.

¹⁸⁷ So, the question is, have the supporters of Dr. Martin's research checked out the veracity of what he here claimed? Maybe it's time that they did.

¹⁸⁸ The only reference to 62 years in the entire Book of Daniel is to the age of the death of Darius the Mede "being about sixty-two years old" (Dan 5:31).

¹⁸⁹ Ernest L. Martin, "Chronology: The Key to Prophetic Understanding - Part 2," 1990, online at <http://askelm.com/prophecy/p900902.htm> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

¹⁹⁰ E. W. Bullinger, *Number in Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Kresge Publications, 1967), 167-68.

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one hour after the rise of the moon, and was a total eclipse. This was the twenty-seventh year of the Nabonassar era. The eclipse has been fully verified as having taken place on March 19, 721. Yet again Ptolemy mentions an eclipse in the seventh year of Campuses [I], which would be the year 225 of the Nabonassar era, or 523 B.C. This eclipse has been computed to have taken place on July 16, 523. And once more Ptolemy states in the *Almagest* that an eclipse of the moon took place in the thirty first year of Darius [I], on Tybi 3/4. Since the death of Campuses [I] occurred in 522 B.C., year 226 of Nabonassar era, the thirty-first year of Darius [I] would bring us to 491 B.C. year 257 of Nabonassar era. The eclipse took place April 25, 491 B.C. The dates of the Nabonassar era have thus been fully established, and once the method of procedure involved in the reckoning of the years of the kings is understood, the canon of Ptolemy may be used as a historical guide with the fullest confidence.¹⁹¹

Thus, it is not necessary to invoke hundreds of eclipses. Ptolemy mentioned the ones that were important and verifiable and that is all we need. Therefore, the objection of insufficient amount of eclipses by Dr. Martin is frankly no real objection at all, and can be summarily dismissed in the overall discussion. Now, let us look at the objections of Robert Newton.

Robert Newton's Criticism of the "Canon"

The biggest critic of Ptolemy's *Canon* to note is the work by Robert Newton called *The Crime of Claudius Ptolemy*.¹⁹² Peter James further commented on Newton's scathing attack on Ptolemy, stating:

According to Newton, all Ptolemy's claimed astronomical observations were fabricated; even worse, he had fudged, or even faked, Babylonian lunar eclipse data in order to match his own shaky calculations.¹⁹³

But Newton's attacks on the Ptolemy's *Almagest* has done little to shake the confidence in this "*Canon of Kings*" among astronomical specialists, as Peter James further observed:¹⁹⁴

But what of Ptolemy's Canon, by which 19th-century historians had set so much store? Was Newton right to claim that 'studies of Babylonian chronology need to be reviewed in order to remove any dependence upon Ptolemy's 'king-list'? On this question Mesopotamian archaeology can now fully repay its debt to the old astronomer. **Though Newton glossed over the fact,** Ptolemy's figures for the regnal years of Babylonian kings have been completely vindicated by a wealth of cuneiform texts, including chronicles, short king lists and dated business documents. The dates derived from Ptolemy's Canon can also be checked using the information from cuneiform 'astronomical diaries'. The Babylonians, originators of western astrology, were, as Ptolemy knew, meticulous observers of the night sky. Their records of the positions of planets and stars, committed to clay by people who believed that these had a vital influence on earthly matters, are extremely detailed — so much so that the observations given various tablets from the 7th to 5th centuries BC can be precisely dated to a year, month and even day by modern astronomers.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdsman, 1965), 44.

¹⁹² Newton, *Crime*, op. cit.

¹⁹³ James, *Centuries of Darkness*, 267.

¹⁹⁴ See Julia Ferne, "The Accession of Artaxerxes I." *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 6 (1968): 60-87.

¹⁹⁵ James, *Centuries of Darkness*, 267-68 (emphasis the author's). Certainly, by the cuneiform evidence produced in the definitive work by Parker and Dubberstein (*Babylonian Chronology*) should put to rest any absurd theory that the *Canon of Ptolemy* is in any way inaccurate. These authors substantiate Babylonian chronology with numerous primary source clay tablet data which cannot be assailed by those unacquainted with this kind of evidence.

The biggest mistake concerning Newton's criticism of Ptolemy's *Canon* was the fact that he believed that it was Ptolemy himself who compiled the *Canon*.¹⁹⁶ But the *Canon* must have been in existence long before Ptolemy. Let us now explore this further.

Who Ever Said it was Ptolemy's Canon in the First Place?

This is a very good question. Many people simply assume that it was Ptolemy himself that somehow compiled this list of kings into his work. But did he? Well, it should be obvious to inquiring minds that for him to have done such a thing would eventually expose him as a total fraud (which is what Robert Newton tried to do).

Elias Bickerman, who famously wrote the *Chronology of the Ancient World*, stated:

The *Canon* ... has been preserved in astronomical manuscripts which generally continue the list up to the time of the scribe, *e. g.* until AD 911. **The *Canon* was established by astronomers of Alexandria** as a chronological basis for their computations. It goes back to the Babylonian king Nabonassar since the continuous astronomical observations began under his reign. **The astronomers of Alexandria**, who used the Egyptian mobile year, reduced the dates of their sources to the same reckoning.¹⁹⁷

Chronologist Carl Olof Jonsson pointed us in the right direction concerning the entire question:

There is, however, evidence that king lists of this type must have been in use long before the time of Claudius Ptolemy.

The reason why the kinglist could not have originated with Claudius Ptolemy is that a table of this kind was a prerequisite for the research and calculations performed by the Babylonian and Greek astronomers. Without it they would have had no means for dating the astronomical events their calculations showed as occurring in the distant past.¹⁹⁸

Indeed, one must have a king list to base their calculations on first, and not the other way around. Jonsson further noted that

There is also some evidence that the Royal Canon reflects not only Babylonian chronicles, but also ancient Babylonian kinglists compiled by Babylonian scribes. Thus scholars have concluded that it was based upon Babylonian chronicles and kinglists, probably through intermediary sources, *but evidently independent of Berossus*. This is a very important conclusion, as the figures given in the canon for the Neo-Babylonian kings are in substantial agreement with Berossus' earlier figures.¹⁹⁹

It is for this reason that the noted Professor Otto Neugebauer (1899-1990) resisted the term "Ptolemy's Canon":

It is a misnomer to call such chronological tables 'Ptolemaic canon.' Ptolemy's 'Almagest' never contained such a canon (in spite of assertions to the contrary often made in modern literature), but we know that a βασιλεων χρονογραφια [Chronology of kings] had been included in his 'Handy Tables' ... On the other hand, there is no reason whatsoever to think that royal canons for astronomical purposes did not exist long before Ptolemy.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁶ Julia Neuffer, "'Ptolemy's Canon' Debunked?" *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 17 (1979): 40.

¹⁹⁷ Elias J. Bickerman, *Chronology of the Ancient World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), 107.

¹⁹⁸ Carl Olaf Jonsson, *The Gentile Times Reconsidered* (Atlanta: Commentary Press, 1998), 94.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

²⁰⁰ Otto Neugebauer, "'Years' in Royal Canon," *A Locust's Leg. Studies in honour of S. H. Taqizadeh*, ed. W. B. Henning and E. Yarshater (London: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., 1962), 209, 210.

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But of course; it is a known fact that these king lists of the ancient Babylonian kings (of the Neo-Babylonian era) and their respective regnal years, existed long before the time of Ptolemy.²⁰¹ Eduard Meyer strongly agreed with this particular fact, stating that

... as it belonged to the traditional material of knowledge of the astronomers, it was inherited from scholar to scholar; not even Hipparchus could have gone without the Babylonian list.²⁰²

This is a very good point to understand concerning Hipparchus. He was a Greek astronomer that Ptolemy cited numerous times and who lived on the Island of Rhodes from *ca.* 190-120 BCE. As noted above, the Calendar that was employed in the *Canon of Kings* was the ancient Egyptian Calendar which counted years as exactly 365 days with no adjustment for leap years. But consider this! In Ptolemy's day, the Julian calendar of 365.25 days was the official Alexandrian civil year which did have a leap year every four years. So, here's the thing; if this was the case, then the question becomes, if Ptolemy really was the originator of this *Canon*, then why would he choose to use the ancient Egyptian calendar instead of the Roman calendar of his day? He could have easily used the Julian calendar if he had so chosen and if the *Canon* were created by him. But back in the days of Hipparchus there was no Julian calendar. In other words, it becomes obvious that Ptolemy, who had access to Hipparchus' work, merely transmitted the *Canon* that Hipparchus had used in his day. Indeed, the *Canon* that Hipparchus used most likely was in existence long before his time as well.²⁰³

The Importance of the Mother of Nabonidus Inscription

In what appears to be some kind of tomb inscription of the mother of the Babylonian king Nabonidus (556–539 BCE),²⁰⁴ we are given a firsthand chronology of her life that was equated with the Assyrian and Babylonian kings that ruled during her lifetime. The inscription reads:

I am Adad-guppi, the mother of Nabonidus, king of Babylon ... From the 20th year of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, when I was born, until the 42nd year of Ashurbanipal, the 3rd year of his son Ashur-etil-ili, the 21st year of Nabopolassar, the 43rd of Nebuchadnezzar, the 2nd year of Awel-Merodoch, the 4th year of Neriglissar, during all the 95 years in which I visited the temple ...²⁰⁵

Nabunaid came to the throne in June of 556 BCE.²⁰⁶ Four years later in 552 BCE Nabunaid's mother, Adad-guppi, was then recorded to be at the age of 95. That places her birth in the year of 647 BCE. That is the exact year that Kandalanu, the predecessor of Nabopolassar came to power.

²⁰¹ Ptolemy himself must have completed the Canon since it goes no further back than the time that he was living. That being said, it must be acknowledged that the last portion of the Canon of the final years of the Ptolemies and the Roman emperors must certainly have been added by Ptolemy himself from data that was readily available in sources of his day.

²⁰² Eduard Meyer, *Forshungen zur alten Geschichte*, Zweiter Band (Halle a. S.: Max Neimeyer, 1899), 453- 54 (author's translation).

²⁰³ Jonsson preferred to use the term that Otto Neugebauer coined, "the Royal Canon," *op. cit.*, 94. However, since the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, as well as the online encyclopedia "Wikipedia" uses the term "*Canon of Kings*," then this will be the appropriate term adopted herein throughout this text.

²⁰⁴ P.-A. Beaulieu, *The Reign of Nabonidus King of Babylon 556-539 B.C.* (New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

²⁰⁵ Cited from James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (3d ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 560-61, translation by C. J. Gadd in "The Harran Inscriptions of Nabonidus," *Anatolian Studies* 8 (1958): 35-92.

²⁰⁶ Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 13.

And as stated, it was also in the 20th year of Ashurbanipal. 20 years earlier places Ashurbanipal's year one as being 648/647, which is exactly where modern scholars place the beginning of his reign.²⁰⁷ Thus, once again, we have nearly a century of collaboration of first-hand chronological data that further confirms the chronology of the *Canon of Kings* as given to us by Ptolemy.

The Babylonian Astronomical Diary VAT 4956

The most important document for vindicating the *Canon of Kings* for the Babylonian period is from what is called “the astronomical tablet for the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar II (568/67 BCE, Spring to Spring).”²⁰⁸ This remarkable tablet details the exact planetary observations of positions of Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn for the entire year. In addition, this tablet records

the durations of first visibility of the new moons, the calendar dates and heights of the floodwaters of the Euphrates, the date of the summer solstice, and fluctuations in weather patterns. Modern astronomical science and computer technology confirm planetary and lunar observations for the thirty-seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar II and for no other year. The state of astronomical knowledge in antiquity was sufficiently limited to absolutely preclude the invention by Hellenistic astronomers of these planetary and lunar observations by extrapolation into the past.²⁰⁹

Thus, we have a fixed date for the 37th year of Nebuchadnezzar as being from 23 April 568 BCE to 12 April 567 BCE.²¹⁰ 37 years earlier establishes the year of 605/04 BCE for the accession year of Nebuchadnezzar. In fact, the *Babylonian Chronicle* confirms that Nebuchadnezzar ascended the throne of Babylon on 7 Sept. 605 BCE.²¹¹

Persian History Confirms the Canon of Kings

After the “Babylonian Period” had come to a close in the year of 525 BCE when Cyrus the Persian finally overthrew the Babylonians, we are thus thrust into the so-called “Persian Period” of ancient history. But what is important to this discussion is that archaeology has also confirmed that Persian history after the Babylonian Period agrees exactly with the *Canon of Kings*.

During the 1930s the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute conducted excavations in Iran and made amazing discoveries of the royal tombs of the Persian kings.

²⁰⁷ A. K. Grayson, “The Chronology of the Reign of Ashurbanipal,” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 70:2 (1980): 227–45.

²⁰⁸ This tablet is known as the astronomical diary VAT 4956 and is presently housed in the Berlin Museum. For detailed discussions in scholarly literature concerning this important tablet, see Paul V. Neugebauer and Ernst F. Weidner, “Ein astronomischer Beobachtungstext aus dem 37. Jahre Nebukadnezars II. (-567/66),” *Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Königlich Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-Historische Klasse*, Band 67:2 (1915), 28-89; Horn and Wood, *Chronology of Ezra 7*; A. J. Sachs and H. Hunger, *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988), 1:12. For a more accessible and less technical discussion, see Jonsson's excellent explanation in his *Gentile Times*, 147-68.

²⁰⁹ Herman L. Hoeh, “When Did Nebuchadnezzar Conquer Jerusalem?” Unpublished paper delivered at the Symposium entitled “Frontiers of Knowledge” at Ambassador College (Pasadena, Calif., 1976), 2.

²¹⁰ Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 26.

²¹¹ *Babylonian Chronicle* BM 21946, I, 9-11: “[9] For twenty-one years Nabopolassar had been the king of Babylon. [10] On the 8th of the month of Ab he died (15 Aug. 605); in the month of Elul Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon [11] and on the first day of the month of Elul (15 Sept. 605) he sat on the royal throne in Babylon” (Donald J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings (626-556 B.C.) in the British Museum* [London: British Museum Publications, 1956], 69).

The Link between Biblical and Secular Chronology

In 1931 the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago began excavations of Persepolis, an undertaking which was carried on through 1940. Cut into the hill behind the platform on which Persepolis was built are the tombs of Artaxerxes II, Artaxerxes III and Darius III. At Naqsh-e Rostam, only three miles from Persepolis, the end of a steep narrow ridge of rock comes to an abrupt end in the plain. High up in the face of the cliff are the rock cut tombs of Darius I, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I and Darius II.²¹²

Adam Rutherford additionally informs us that:

Furthermore the remains of a palace of Artaxerxes III have also been discovered. An inscription of Emperor Artaxerxes himself as appears on the walls of that palace to the present day is most informative ... The English translation of section 2 of this inscription appears on page 224 of Erich F. Schmidt's beautiful illustrated work *Persepolis I*; it reads —

*"Says Artaxerxes the great king, king of kings, king of countries, king of this earth: I (am) the son of Artaxerxes (II) the king; Artaxerxes (was) the son of Darius (II) the king; Darius (was) the son of Artaxerxes (I) the king; Artaxerxes was the son of Xerxes the king; Xerxes (was) the son of Darius (I) the king; Darius was the son of Hystaspes by name. Hystaspes (was) the son of Arsames by name, the Achaemenid."*²¹³

This is direct archaeological evidence that is in complete accord with the list of kings in the *Canon of Kings*. There can be no other conclusion that this evidence is firsthand verification of this *Canon*. Adam Rutherford further contends that

... the truth is that had Ptolemy never lived, the accepted chronology of the Persian period would have been just the same. Ptolemy summarized history and made convenient lists of the kings with the duration of their reigns and employed the truly scientific method of astronomical fixing where possible. Because of their concise and convenient form, Ptolemy's works became the standard reference works, for skeleton chronology at any rate. But the great events in the history of the Persians in their contact with the Greeks are recorded in Grecian chronology quite independently of Ptolemy's records, and yet they are found to be in complete agreement with Ptolemy.²¹⁴

Well said! This is absolutely true! Had there never been a *Canon of Kings* transmitted to us by Ptolemy's *Handy Tables*, scholars of today, based upon classical history and cuneiform evidences would have easily produced their own "Canon of Kings" that would have agreed exactly with what Ptolemy preserved. And speaking of classical history, let us see why this statement is ever so true.

Enter — Classical Historians

The famous chronologist William Hales (1747 – 1831) had shown us that the classical historians were in agreement with the *Canon of Kings* preserved by the astronomer Ptolemy. Also, it is an interesting (and logical) fact as to why Ptolemy expressed his dates in the ancient Egyptian calendar as opposed to the Babylonian calendar. Hales explains his reasoning in the following manner:

The freedom of the Nabonassarean year, from intercalation, rendered it peculiarly convenient for astronomical calculation. Hence it was adopted by the early Greek astronomers, *Timochares* and *Hipparchus* and by those of the *Alexandrian* school, *Ptolomy (sic!)* &c. In consequence of this, the whole historical catalogue of reigns has been commonly, **though improperly, called Ptolomy's Canon**;

²¹² *Collier's Encyclopedia*, 15:567-68, article, "Persian Architecture: Achaemenid Period 553-330 B.C.," as quoted in Rutherford's *Chronology*, 16.

²¹³ Rutherford, *Chronology*, 16.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

because he probably continued the original table of *Chaldean* and *Persian* kings, and added thereto the *Egyptian* and *Roman*, down to his own time.²¹⁵

Dr. Hales then brilliantly proceeded to give us the following information concerning what the classical historians reported on the accuracy of the *Canon of Kings* as “preserved” by Ptolemy:

1. *Thucydides*, B. 8, has preserved a curious original document, in the third treaty of peace concluded between *Tissaphernes* and the *Peloponnesians*, beginning with its date: “In the 13th year of the reign of Darius [II, Nothus,] &c.” This treaty, it appears from the history, was made in winter, in the 20th year of the Peloponnesian war, which began in the spring, B.C. 431; and, consequently, the 20th year, in winter, was the beginning of the Julian year, B.C. 410: which, added to the 13th year of Darius, or 337th of the Era, gives its commencement, **B.C. 747.**

2. *Censorinus* [De Die Natale, 21.1], in the valuable synchronisms mentioned before, states, that the 986th *Nabonassarean* year began the 7th of the Calends of July, or June 25, in the year A.D. 238, in which he published his work. Therefore, that Nabonassarean year did not end till June 25, of the next Julian year, A.D. 239; which, subtracted from 986, gives the commencement of the Era, **B.C. 747.**

3. According to *Ptolemy*, *Hipparchus* selected three ancient eclipses of the moon, out of those observed at *Babylon*, and brought from thence; of which the first happened in the first year; and the two others, in the second year of *Mardok Empadus*, the fifth king in succession from *Nabonassar*. This proves decisively, that the Era of Nabonassar was in established use before the time of Hipparchus, though he did not give the collected years from the beginning of the Era. These, probably, were not reckoned up in the original Chaldean Era, which only marked the succession of kings, and the number of years which each reigned. The collected years might have been added afterwards by the Egyptian astronomers.

Ptolemy himself mentions a lunar eclipse of 7 digits, in the 7th year of *Ptolemy Philometor*, and 574th year from Nabonassar, which happened on the 27th of the Egyptian month *Phamenoth*, and lasted from the 8th, to the 10th hour. In that year, the 27th of *Phamenoth*, was the first of May. And, by astronomical calculation, there was a lunar eclipse of 7 dig. 26 min. on May 1, B.C. 174, which lasted 2 h. 50 min.; and this year, B.C. 174, added to 573 years complete, gives **B.C. 747**, for the commencement of the Era.²¹⁶

This independent testimony by these classical historians is just the kind of evidence that adds to the confidence level that the *Canon of Kings* is accurate as a benchmark. We thus are on firm ground. This important chronological apparatus finally solidifies the chronology of ancient Babylonia with that of the Bible. It is evidence that was preserved by the second-century astronomer, Ptolemy, that has been successively corroborated with secular history as attested by classical historians.

Persian and Greek History: Enter Herodotus

To begin with, the renowned Greek historian, Herodotus (*ca.* 484 – 425/413 BCE), informs us that the famous sea battle of Salamis, wherein the Persian king Xerxes I was defeated by the Greeks, is dated to the archonship of one Calliades:

Since the crossing of the Hellespont, where the barbarians began their journey, they had spent one month there crossing into Europe and in three more months were in Attica, **when Calliades was archon at Athens.**²¹⁷

²¹⁵ William Hales, *A New Analysis of Chronology, etc.*, (London: C. J. G. & F. Rivington, 1830), 155-56.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 156-57.

²¹⁷ Herodotus, *The Histories*, 8:51.1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 83. Interestingly, this was the one and only time that Herodotus ever synchronized events of history with the Athenian Archons.

The Link between Biblical and Secular Chronology

The list of annual archons has been established and the archonship of Calliades occurred in 480 BCE.²¹⁸

Next, Diodorus Siculus confirms the fact that the battle occurred in the archonship of Calliades, but adds an important fact that in that very same year occurred the 75th Olympic games:

Calliades was archon in Athens, and the Romans made Spurius Cassius and Proculus Verginius Tricostus consuls, and the Eleians celebrated the Seventy-fifth Olympiad, that in which Astylus of Syracuse won the “stadion.” It was in this year that king Xerxes made his campaign against Greece ...²¹⁹

The Olympic games occurred every four years (known as an “Olympiad”) and the 75th Olympiad occurred in 480 BCE.²²⁰ But there is more:

The date is still further established by Herodotus’ record of an eclipse of the sun a few days after the Battle of Salamis, for astronomical computation confirms that a solar eclipse, visible in Greece, took place on 2nd October, 480 B.C., just nine days after Xerxes’ defeat at Salamis in the 6th year of his reign. Thus the above completely independent proof is in perfect agreement with the data of Ptolemy’s Canon which reveals the dates of the Persian king, Xerxes I, as 485-464 B.C.²²¹

So far, everything that we have investigated confirms the validity of the dates of Babylonian kings transmitted to us by Ptolemy in the *Canon of Kings*.

Babylonian Astronomy Confirms the “Canon of Kings”

The ancient Chaldeans could be said to be the originators of astronomy as an exact science. John Draper noted that

Callisthenes obtained in Babylon a series of Chaldean astronomical observations ranging back through 1,903 years; these he sent to Aristotle. Perhaps, since they were on burnt bricks, duplicates of them may be recovered by modern research in the clay libraries of the Assyrian kings. Ptolemy, the Egyptian astronomer, possessed a Babylonian record of eclipses, going back 747 years before our era. Long-continued and close observations were necessary, before some of these astronomical results that have reached our times could have been ascertained. Thus the Babylonians had fixed the length of a tropical year within twenty-five seconds of the truth; their estimate of the sidereal year was barely two minutes in excess. They had detected the precession of the equinoxes. They knew the causes of eclipses, and, by the aid of their cycle called Saros, could predict them. Their estimate of the value of that cycle, which is more than 6,585 days, was within nineteen and a half minutes of the truth. Such facts furnish incontrovertible proof of the patience and skill with which astronomy had been cultivated in Mesopotamia, and that, with very inadequate instrumental means, it had reached no inconsiderable perfection.²²²

The 1903 years reported here were preserved by the Latin writer of the sixth century CE, Simplicius.²²³ And as noted here, this period of time was therefore reckoned from when Alexander the Great defeated Darius III of Persia at Gaugamela in 331 BCE,²²⁴ wherein he immediately went to

²¹⁸ Bickerman, *Chronology*, 168.

²¹⁹ Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 11.1.2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press [Loeb Classical Library 279], 1946), 4:121.

²²⁰ Bickerman, *Chronology*, 75-76.

²²¹ Rutherford, *Chronology*, 18.

²²² John William Draper, *The Conflict Between Religion and Science* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1875), 13.

²²³ Simplicius, *De Caelo* (“About the Heavens”), 1.2, apud Ussher, *Annals*, 22.

the ancient city of Babylon.²²⁵ Alexander then did the right thing and sent this information to his famous tutor, Aristotle, to be interpreted and preserved for future astronomers, like Ptolemy. Indeed, does this narrative not have a touch of divine guidance?

Proof from the “Saros”

Concerning the term “Saros” mentioned in the above quote, this is a supernatural phenomenon that finally gives us the greatest confidence in the *Canon of Kings* preserved by Ptolemy. The “Saros” was a period which equals 18 years, 11 and 1/3rd days. Then after that cycle of time completes itself, the positions of the sun and moon are nearly at the same positions as observed from the earth as they were when the cycle began.²²⁶ What a remarkable phenomenon! And what makes this so remarkable is that the ancient Chaldeans discovered this fact thousands of years ago simply by continuous observations and recordings.

But what is most important to understand about this Saros cycle is that it is firmly fixed by the motions of the solar system. It does not matter one bit that this information is not in the Bible. King David exclaimed:

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of mortals that you care for them (Ps 8:3-4).

The Biblical revelation is that it was the creator God who created these cycles. It was God who intended us, humans, to understand them as important chronological phenomena and use them to carry on the chronology of the Biblical revelation as if it were data that was revealed as Scripture itself. And it is fortunate that the ancient Chaldeans and Babylonians were able to make these celestial synchronisms with the reigns of their kings of Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

Therefore, the evidence that has been handed down to us by actual cuneiform tablets created during the period of the Seleucid kings unearthed *in situ* confirms the dates of the *Canon of Kings* preserved by Ptolemy. This evidence therefore must be the ultimate arbitrator in the decision to accept the testimony of the *Canon of Kings*.

Scholars Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood inform us:

For the Persian period, these Saros gives, for example, the following

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|------------|
| 9th (year of) | Darius [I] | 18 (years) |
| 27th (year of) | Darius [I] | 18 (years) |
| 9th (year of) | Xerxes | 18 (years) |
| 6th (year of) | Artaxerxes [I] | 18 (years) |
| 24th (year of) | Artaxerxes [I] | 18 (years) |
| 1st (year of) | Darius [II] | 18 (years) |

²²⁴ Since the Battle of Gaugamela occurred in 331 BCE, 1903 years earlier places us in the year of 2234 BCE, 28 years before the Tower of Babel event in 2216 BCE.

²²⁵ Abraham was born in 2023 BCE. Thus the Sumerians started their astronomical calculations 211 years before the birth of Abram (2234-2023 = 211).

²²⁶ “As for the time span that each row spans, it is easy to calculate that it is: 38 x 6 months - 5.1 months - 223 months = 6585 days = 18 years + 11 days” (Joseph Epping and J. N. Strassmaier, “Der Saros-Canon der Babylonier,” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* [Achter Band, 1893]: 154).

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The lengths of reign of the various kings can thus be easily determined. If, for example, 18 years elapsed between the 27th year of Darius I and the 9th year of Xerxes, Darius' reign must have had a total length of 36 years, and if 18 years lay between the 9th year of Xerxes and the 6th year of Artaxerxes I, Xerxes must have reigned altogether 21 years. Since the regnal year of kings as derived from the Saros Tablets agrees in each case with those given in Ptolemy's Canon, one serves as check on the other and supports the data provided by the other.²²⁷

What more proof do we need concerning the validity and accuracy of the *Canon of Kings*? It is high time to finally put these objections to bed. Satisfied that the *Canon of Kings*, transmitted by Ptolemy, has been ultimately vindicated, we can thus move on. But there is one more thing we need to address.

Abraham — A Scientist?

As a sidelight, it is interesting to understand what history, apart from the Bible, tells us about Abraham and his contribution to the knowledge of celestial science who lived at a time and place — Ur of the Chaldees — where Chaldean celestial science was invented.

We have already seen that the Biblical Abram was basically raised for the first 50 years of his life under the tutorship of Noah and Shem (2233-1733 BCE).²²⁸ The Apostle Peter described Noah as a “herald of righteousness” (2 Pet 2:5). And Jewish tradition also identifies Shem as being none other than the Melchizedek,²²⁹ the king of Salem (*i.e.*, Jeru-Salem), who entertained Abram (Gen 14:18-20).²³⁰

The Rabbis identify Shem with Melchizedek, King of Salem, who is termed “a priest of the Most High,” and who came to meet Abraham after the latter had defeated the four kings led by Chedorlaomer (Gen. xiv. 18-20). According to this account, Shem, as a priest, came to Jerusalem (with which Salem is identified by the Rabbis), of which city **he became king**,²³¹ it being the proper place for the establishment of the cult of YHWH. He went to meet Abraham to show him that he was not angry with him for having killed the Elamites, his descendants.²³²

²²⁷ Horn and Wood, *Chronology of Ezra 7*, 97, quoting J. N. Strassmaier, “Einige chronologische Daten aus astronomischen Rechnungen,” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 7 (1892): 197-204, and also his “Zur Chronologie der Seleuciden,” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 8 (1893): 106-13.

²²⁸ “And in the fiftieth year of the life of Abram son of Terah, Abram came forth from the house of Noah, and went to his father's house” (*Jasher* 11:13).

²²⁹ *Targum Neophyti* Genesis 14:18; *Avot de Rabbi Natan* (A) 2; Ephraem, *Commentary on Genesis* 11:2; *Bereishit Rabbah* 43:6.

²³⁰ Noah was still alive in Abram's 50th year and lived another eight years beyond. Shem outlived Abraham by another 35 years. It may be that after the death of Noah, Shem carried his body from Mesopotamia to the city of Salem in Canaan and it is there that he became known as the “righteous king,” *i.e.*, Melchizedek. It could also mean that when Abram was with Noah and Shem, that he became literate and gathered all the material that became the basis for the traditions that became the *Book of Genesis*, which Moses (and the traditions of *Jasher*) were able to build upon.

²³¹ If Shem was considered a “Priest,” as well as a “King,” then should we not consider that his immediate descendant's, at least who also came from his priestly and kingly line of Noah, be considered in such a status as well? Indeed, should not Abraham also be considered a Priest and a King? Abraham had vast wealth. Abraham's servant is recorded as stating that “The Lord has greatly blessed my master so that he has become rich; and he has given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and servants, and maids and camels and donkeys” (Gen 24:35). The first military adventure mentioned in the Bible is where Abraham assembled an army of 318 of his servants to recapture his nephew Lot (Gen 14:1-9). Therefore, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and so on, were not only the basis for the kingly lines of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, but also for the Trojan kings, who became the ancestors of the early kings of Britain, Italy, Germany, France, *etc.*, even unto the many royal monarchical families of this day.

²³² Max Seligsohn, “Shem” in *Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1905), 11:261.

But in Abram's 50th year he withdrew from the care of his ancestors and mentors, Noah and Shem, and returned to his father's house in the city of Ur of the Chaldees. This was in the year of 1973 BCE or AM 1998.

It may be that after the death of Terach, Abram's father (in 1888 BCE), Noah and Shem had also relocated from Mesopotamia to the city of Salem in Canaan and it is there that Shem became known as Melchi-Zedek (*lit.* "my king [is] righteous"). It could also mean that when Abram was with Noah and Shem, that he became literate in the Babylonian and Hebrew languages, and gathered all the material that became the basis for the traditions that became the *Book of Genesis*, which Moses (and in the later traditions in the midrashic *Book of Jasher*) were able to build upon.

But there is more to the story; Josephus tells us that Abram

... was a person of **great sagacity**, both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his opinions; for which reason he began to have higher notions of virtue than others had, and he determined to renew and to change the opinion all men happened then to have concerning God; for he was the first that ventured to publish this notion [monotheism], That there was but **one God, the Creator of the universe**.²³³

It is apparent that Abraham at this time became most likely what we would call today a mathematician in the same sense as Sir Isaac Newton, or an astronomer like Ptolemy, or a philosopher, like Plato and Aristotle, but a theologian like the Apostle Paul. Josephus continued stating that Abraham's

... opinion was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea, as well as those that happen to **the sun and moon, and all the heavenly bodies**.²³⁴

Samuel Kurinsky further understood that to mean that

... the close association between Jewish and Babylonian science was drawn by Berosus, a Babylonian priest and historian who wrote about Abraham that "in the tenth generation after the flood,²³⁵ there was among the **Chaldeans** a man righteous and great, and **skillful in the celestial science**." Josephus recalled these traditional attributes of Abraham in relating how Abraham was welcomed into Egypt as a great scientist ... he introduced them to the complexities of mathematics, "and delivered to them the **science of astronomy**; for before Abram came to Egypt they were unacquainted with those parts of learning; for **that science also came from the Chaldeans** into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also."²³⁶

And furthermore Josephus tells us that the authoritative sources that he drew from were

Moreover, besides those aforementioned, Theophilus, and Theodotus, and Mnaseas, and Aristophanes, and Hermogenes, and Euhemerus, and Conon, Zopyrion, and perhaps many others ...²³⁷

Josephus further mentions other sources that he consulted in compiling his histories:

However, Demetrius Phalerius, and the elder Philo, with Eupolemus, have not greatly missed the truth about our affairs.²³⁸

²³³ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.1 [§154-55] (Whiston, 38).

²³⁴ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.7.1 [§156] (Whiston, 38).

²³⁵ Although Berossos does not mention Abraham's name per se, if we count from the generation of Shem as being the first one from the flood, then it turns out that Abraham arose exactly in the tenth generation in number. Therefore, Berossos' description of this man certainly fits perfectly with the generation of Abraham.

²³⁶ Samuel Kurinsky, *The Eighth Day* (Northvale, N. J.: Jason Aronson, Inc., 1994), 294.

²³⁷ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.*, 1:23 [§216] (Whiston, 786-87).

²³⁸ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.*, 1:23 [§218] (Whiston, 787).

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Kurinsky, commenting on this list of names stated that:

The antiquity of these references extends to pre-Alexandrian Aristophanes (c. 448-388), a playwright whose masterpieces have survived. The idea that mathematical and astronomic knowledge stemmed generally from the Babylonian East and, in many cases, specifically from the Jews, was rife among the ancient Greek authors, and lasted into the third century of the Common Era. The extent of the influence of the Jews acknowledged by Hecataeus was further amplified by the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyrius (233-304 C.E.) in his work of about 275 C.E. Porphyrius was likewise impressed with the extent of Jewish astronomic wisdom; he quoted the pupil and successor of Aristotle, of Lesbos: "... inasmuch as they are philosophers by race, they discuss the nature of the Deity among themselves, and spend the night observing the stars."²³⁹

Since the *Canon of Kings* has been vindicated by the numerous proofs given above, critics notwithstanding, this author is proud to republish this famous historical document for future reference for students of ancient chronology.

The Canon of Kings

Table 5:

| The Kings of Babylon ^a | | | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| No. | Names of Rulers | | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Egyptian Dates According to the <i>Canon</i> BCE |
| | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars^b | Greek Rulers as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | | | |
| 1 | Nabû-nasir | Nabonassáros | 14 | 1-14 | 27 Feb 747 - 22 Feb 733 |
| 2 | Nabû-nadin-zer(i) | Nadíós | 2 | 15-16 | 23 Feb 733 - 21 Feb 731 |
| 3 | Ukin-zer and Pulu ^c | Khinzêr and Póros | 5 | 17-21 | 22 Feb 731- 20 Feb 726 |
| 4 | Ululai ^d | Iloulaíos | 5 | 22-26 | 21 Feb 726- 19 Feb 721 |
| 5 | Marduk-apla-iddina II | Mardokempádos | 12 | 25-38 | 20 Feb 721- 16 Feb 709 |
| 6 | Šarru-ukin ^e II | Arkéanós | 6 | 37-43 | 17 Feb 709 - 14 Feb 704 |
| 7 | First Interregnum | “Without Kings” ^f | 2 | 42-44 | 15 Feb 704 - 14 Feb 702 |

²³⁹ Kurinsky, *The Eighth Day*, 294-95.

Table 5:

| The Kings of Babylon ^a | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| No. | Names of Rulers | | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Egyptian Dates According to the <i>Canon</i> BCE |
| | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars ^b | Greek Rulers as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | | | |
| 8 | Bêl-ipni | Bêlîbos | 3 | 45-48 | 15 Feb 702 - 13 Feb 699 |
| 9 | Aššur-nadin-šumni | Aparanadíos | 6 | 47-54 | 14 Feb 699 - 12 Feb 693 |
| 10 | Nergal-ušeziḫ | Hrêgêbêlos | 1 | 55 | 13 Feb 693 - 11 Feb 692 |
| 11 | Mušeziḫ-Marduk | Mesêsimordákos | 4 | 56-59 | 12 Feb 692 - 10 Feb 688 |
| 12 | Second Interregnum | “Without Kings” | 8 | 60-66 | 11 Feb 688 - 8 Feb 680 |
| 13 | Ashur-akh-iddin ^g | Asarádínos | 13 | 67-79 | 9 Feb 680 - 5 Feb 667 |
| 14 | Šamaš-šuma-ukin ^h | Saoudoukhínos | 20 | 80-99 | 6 Feb 667 - 31 Jan 647 |
| 15 | Kandalanu | Kinêladanos | 22 | 100-121 | 1 Feb 647 - 26 Jan 625 |
| 16 | Nabu-apal-usur | Nabopolassáros | 21 | 122-142 | 27 Jan 625 - 20 Jan 604 |
| 17 | Nebuchadrezzar II | Nabokolassáros | 43 | 143-185 | 21 Jan 604 - 10 Jan 561 |
| 18 | Amel-Marduk | Illoaroudámos | 2 | 186-187 | 11 Jan 561 - 9 Jan 559 |
| 19 | Nergal-shar-usur ⁱ | Nêrigasolassáros | 4 | 188-191 | 10 Jan 559 - 8 Jan 555 |
| 20 | Nabu-na'id ^j | Nabonadíos | 17 | 192-209 | 9 Jan 555 - 4 Jan 538 |

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- a. Dates given herein are Before the Common Era (BCE) until Roman times, where it crosses over to the Common Era (CE). A Wikipedia note reminds us that “The Canon only increments by whole years. Thus, monarchs who reigned for less than one year are not listed, and only one monarch is listed in any year with multiple monarchs. Usually, the overlapping year is assigned to the monarch who died in that year, but not always. Note that both periods where no king is listed represent times when Sennacherib, King of Assyria, had effective control over Babylon. His name is not listed because of the antipathy the Babylonians had for him due to his destruction of the city during 689 BCE (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canon_of_Kings, (accessed Mar. 9, 2022)).” Edwin R. Thiele also remarked that “Ptolemy’s canon was prepared primarily for astronomical, not historical, purposes. It did not pretend to give a complete list of all the rulers of either Babylon or Persia, not the exact month or day of the beginning of their reigns, but it was a device which made possible the correct allocation into a broad chronological scheme of certain astronomical data which were then available. Kings whose reigns were less than a year and which did not embrace New Year’s Day were not mentioned in the canon. The years are Egyptian years beginning with the first of Thoth, 747 B.C., which that year fell on February 27 and which every four years thereafter came one day earlier, till in 332 it fell on November 15” (*Mysterious Numbers*, 216-217).
- b. Spellings given here are for the most part from Albert K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Winona Lake, Wisc., 2000); originally WuJ. J. Augustin, 1975), Appendix B.
- c. Many modern scholars believe that “Pulu” was the same person as Tiglath-pileser III; he was not! This belief is somehow solidified in the fact that a “Pulu” in the Babylonian king lists died in the same year as Tiglath-pileser III (726 BCE). However, it must be maintained that such an interesting coincidence is not compelling evidence to overthrow the chronology presented herein based upon the Masoretic Text.
- d. Scholars believe that this king was the Assyrian King known as Shalmaneser V, son of Tiglath-pileser III. It is more likely that Shalmaneser V is a myth and this is actually the misplaced Shalmaneser III.
- e. He was the Assyrian king, otherwise known as Sargon II.
- f. Since Marduk-zakir-šumi and Marduk-bêl-iddin were not recognized as legitimate kings by the Babylonians, the *Canon* listed these years as “kingless years” and therefore, as interregnums.
- g. This king equates to the “Esarhaddon” of Scripture (681–669 BCE); see 2 Kgs 19:37, Ezra 4:2.
- h. He was the son of the previous ruler, Esarhaddon, appointed to be the King of Babylon from 668 BCE until his death in 648 BCE. See Sidney Smith, “Dating by Ashurbanipal and Kandalanu” in *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 3 (July, 1928): 622-26.
- i. Or “Neriglissar” in most Dictionaries.
- j. In the accession year of Nabunaid, there was a short 9 month reign of Labashi-Marduk, which is not counted in the *Canon*, nor in Parker and Dubberstein’s *Babylonian Chronology*, 29, since his short reign occurred within the accession year of Nabunaid (*Ibid.*, 13).

The Canon of Kings, continued

Table 6:

| The Kings of Persia, 538–332 BCE | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| No. | Names of Rulers | | Years of Reign BCE | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Egyptian Dates According to the <i>Canon</i> BCE |
| | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars | Names as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | | | |
| 21 | Cyrus (the Great) | Kúroš | 9 | 210-218 | 5 Jan 538 - 2 Jan 529 |
| 22 | Cambyses II | Kambysos | 8 | 219-226 | 3 Jan 529 - 31 Dec 522 |
| 23 | Darius I (the Great) | Dareios ^α | 36 | 227-262 | 1 Jan 521 - 22 Dec 486 |

Table 6:

| The Kings of Persia, 538–332 BCE | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| No. | Names of Rulers | | Years of Reign BCE | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Egyptian Dates According to the <i>Canon</i> BCE |
| | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars | Names as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | | | |
| 24 | Xerxes I | Xerxes | 21 | 263-283 | 23 Dec 486 - 16 Dec 465 |
| 25 | Artaxerxes I (Logimanus) | Artaxerxes α | 41 | 284-324 | 17 Dec 465 - 7 Dec 424 |
| 26 | Darius II (Nothus) | Dareios β | 19 | 325-343 | 8 Dec 424 - 1 Dec 405 |
| 27 | Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) | Artaxerxes β | 46 | 344-389 | 2 Dec 405 - 20 Nov 359 |
| 28 | Artaxerxes III (Ochus) | Ochos | 21 | 390-410 | 21 Nov 359 - 15 Nov 338 |
| 29 | Artaxerxes IV (Arses) | Arogus | 2 | 411-412 | 16 Nov 338 - 14 Nov 336 |
| 30 | Darius III (Codomannus) | Dareios γ | 4 | 413-416 | 15 Nov 336 - 13 Nov 332 |
| 31 | Alexander III | Alexandros the Macedonian ^a | 8 | 417-424 | 14 Nov 332 - 11 Nov 324 |

a. Alexander of Macedonia is the “Alexander the Great” of modern history books. Although Alexander succeeded his father Philip II in 336 BCE in Macedonia, he did not assume hegemony over Egypt until 331 BCE. Therefore, in the *Canon of Kings*, year 6 of Alexander was made to coincide with year 5 of Darius III.

The *Canon of Kings*, continued

Table 7:

| The Kings of Macedonia, 331-305 BCE | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--|
| No. | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars | Greek Names as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Era of Seleucid BCE | Egyptian Dates According to the <i>Canon</i> BCE |
| 32 | Philip III Arrhidaeus ^a | Philippos | 7 | 425 - 431 | 6 | 12 Nov 324 - 9 Nov 317 |

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Table 7:

| The Kings of Macedonia, 331-305 BCE | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| No. | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars | Greek Names as Given in the Canon of Kings | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Era of Seleucid BCE | Egyptian Dates According to the <i>Canon</i> BCE |
| 33 | Alexander IV ^b | The other Alexandros | 12 | 432 - 443 | 7-19 | 10 Nov 317 - 6 Nov 305 |

a. Year 1 of Philip III coincided with year 14 of Alexander III (Alexander the Great).

b. The *Canon* calls this Alexander: "Alexander II," apparently with the belief that Alexander [the Great] was the first Alexander in the line of Macedonian kings. In volume two of this series, the full line of Macedonian kings will be restored identifying the two previous Alexanders. Here we understand that year 1 of Alexander IV is identified as coinciding with year 8 of Philip III. In the 6th year of Alexander IV, Seleucus Nicanor conquered Babylon in 312/311 BCE and began the era that bears his name (Seleucid Era).

The *Canon of Kings*, continued

Table 8:

| The Ptolemaic Empire, 305-30 BCE | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|-----------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| No. | Names of Rulers | | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Seleucid Era BCE | Dates Before the Common Era BCE |
| | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars | Greek Names of Rulers as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | | | | |
| 34 | Ptolemy I Soter (Lagus) | Ptolemaios, son of Lagos | 20 | 444 - 463 | 20-39 | 7 Nov 305 - 1 Nov 285 |
| 35 | Ptolemy II Philadelphus | Philadelphos | 38 | 464 - 501 | 40-77 | 2 Nov 285 - 23 Oct 247 |
| 36 | Ptolemy III Euergetes I | Euergetes | 25 | 502 - 526 | 78-102 | 24 Oct 247 - 17 Oct 222 |
| 37 | Ptolemy IV Philopator | Philopator | 17 | 527 - 543 | 103-119 | 18 Oct 222 - 12 Oct 205 |
| 38 | Ptolemy V Epiphanes | Epiphanes | 24 | 544 - 567 | 120- 143 | 13 Oct 205 - 6 Nov 180 |
| 39 | Ptolemy VI Philometor | Philopator | 35 | 569 - 602 | 144-178 | 7 Oct 180 - 28 Sept 146 |

Table 8:

| The Ptolemaic Empire, 305-30 BCE | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| No. | Names of Rulers | | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar BCE | Seleucid Era BCE | Dates Before the Common Era BCE |
| | Names of Rulers as Rendered by Modern Scholars | Greek Names of Rulers as Given in the <i>Canon of Kings</i> | | | | |
| 40 | Ptolemy VIII ^a Euergetes II | Euergetes β | 29 | 603 - 631 | 179-207 | 29 Sept 146 - 20 Sept 117 |
| 41 | Ptolemy IX Soter II | Soter | 36 | 632 - 667 | 208-243 | 21 Sept 117 - 11 Sept 81 |
| 42 | Ptolemy XII ^b Auletes | Dionysos Neos | 29 | 668 - 696 | 244-276 | 12 Sept 81 - 4 Sept 52 |
| 43 | Cleopatra VII Philopator | Kleopatra | 22 | 697 - 718 | 277-294 | 5 Sept 52 - 30 Aug 30 |

a. Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator reigned briefly with his father Ptolemy VI in 145 BCE and therefore, reigning less than a year, was not included in the *Canon*.

b. Ptolemy X Alexander I and Ptolemy XI Alexander II also reigned less than a year and thus were not included in the *Canon*.

The *Canon of Kings*, continued

Table 9:

| The Roman Empire, 30 BCE -160 CE | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|---|
| No. | Names of Roman Rulers | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar | Seleucid Era | Dates Before and After the Common Era BCE/CE |
| 44 | Augustus | 43 | 719 - 761 | 295 - 316 | 31 Aug 30 BCE - 19 Aug 14 CE ^a |
| 45 | Tiberius | 22 | 762 - 783 | 317 - 359 | 20 Aug 14 - 13 Aug 36 |
| 46 | Gaius | 4 | 784 - 787 | 360 - 363 | 14 Aug 36 - 12 Aug 40 |
| 47 | Claudius | 14 | 788 - 801 | 364 - 377 | 13 Aug 40 - 10 Aug 54 |

The Link between Biblical and Secular Chronology

Table 9:

| The Roman Empire, 30 BCE -160 CE | | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---|
| No. | Names of Roman Rulers | Years of Reign | Era of Nabonassar | Seleucid Era | Dates Before and After the Common Era BCE/CE |
| 48 | Nero | 14 | 802 - 815 | 378 - 391 | 11 Aug 54 - 5 Aug 68 |
| 49 | Vespasian | 10 | 816 - 825 | 392 - 401 | 6 Aug 68 - 3 Aug 78 |
| 50 | Titus | 3 | 826 - 828 | 402 - 404 | 4 Aug 78 - 2 Aug 81 |
| 51 | Domitian | 15 | 829 - 843 | 405 - 419 | 3 Aug 81 - 29 Jul 96 |
| 52 | Nerva | 1 | 844 | 420 | 30 Jul 96 - 29 Jul 97 |
| 53 | Trajan | 19 | 845 - 863 | 421 - 439 | 30 Jul 97 - 24 Jul 116 |
| 54 | Hadrian | 21 | 864 - 884 | 440 - 460 | 25 Jul 116- 19 Jul 137 |
| 55 | Aelius Antoninus | 23 | 885 - 907 | 461 - 483 | 20 Jul 137 - 13 Jul 160 |

a. Although Augustus came to power in Rome in 63 BCE, it wasn't until 30 BCE that he overthrew Cleopatra, which is reflected in the chronology of the *Canon of Kings*.

Now that we have established the fact that the *Canon of Kings* is a reliable and vital source bridging the gap of Scriptural chronology and secular chronology, we can now move forward and return to establishing the link between the first siege of Jerusalem and secular chronology.

Jeremiah's Important Account of the First Siege of Jerusalem

Jeremiah's detailed eye-witness account of the siege of Jerusalem gives us vital information that brings us down to Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year:

In the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month — which was the **nineteenth year** of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon — Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard who served the king of Babylon, entered Jerusalem. He burned the house of the Lord, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, every great house he burned down. All the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down all the walls around Jerusalem. Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile some of the poorest of the people and the rest of the people who were left in the city and the desserts who had defected to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the artisans. But Nebuzaradan the cap-

tain of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to be vinedressers and tillers of the soil (Jer 52:12-16, also 2 Kgs 25:8-12).

Since Jeremiah tells us that the siege took place in Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year, then one could simply deduce that the date would be 586/85 BCE ($605/4 - 19 = 586/5$) for the Fall of Jerusalem, right? That is what advocates of the 586 BCE date for the destruction of Jerusalem would have you believe. But is this argument correct and is it really that simple? If that is so, then why has this explanation been challenged in the first place? It would seem that this argument would be simply accepted based upon the simple arithmetic of their argument. Nevertheless, more and more scholars are beginning to adopt 587 BCE as the date for the Fall of Jerusalem? But why?

The answer is that the solution is not as simple as those who believe in the year of 586 BCE would have you think. But there is one thing that most scholars agree on whether they accept 586 BCE or 587 BCE. All scholars are unanimous in the belief that Nebuchadnezzar's accession year is fixed at 605/4 BCE. And if that is the case, then where does the difference of opinion on the date for the Fall of Jerusalem stem from? To answer this important question, we must review all the pertinent data in order to resolve this conundrum.

Why the Year 586 BCE for the Fall of Jerusalem was Advanced

This is the crucial question to answer. Prior to the year 1956, scholarly opinion had tended to regard the year 586 BCE as the preferred date for the Fall of Jerusalem. Then, suddenly, something dramatically happened that started a reversal of that opinion. And what was that astounding development? It was the discovery of a Babylonian tablet that had been tucked away in the British Museum for decades since its initial discovery in the late 1800s. The breakthrough finally came to light in the critical publication in 1956 by the British Museum, authored by Donald J. Wiseman.²⁴⁰ These tablets chronicled the sequence of events of the famous Babylonian king Nabopolassar and his legendary son, Nebuchadnezzar. Furthermore, these texts covered the years 626-623 BCE, 608-595 BCE, and 556 BCE.²⁴¹

Upon the publication of this highly significant monograph by Donald J. Wiseman in 1956 a number of scholars immediately rushed to their typewriters to write an article on their views concerning the significance of this discovery and send it to scholarly journals in order to go on record with respect to their views concerning this new material.

After reviewing this new evidence, it would appear that there was also unanimous agreement that the tablet BM 21946 established the fact that the first siege of Jerusalem occurred on 2 Adar in

²⁴⁰ Donald J. Wiseman, *Chronicles of Chaldean Kings (626-556 B.C.) in the British Museum* (London: British Museum Publications, 1956).

²⁴¹ The publication of this monumental and demonstrative monograph in 1956 rocked the scholarly world as few other scholarly publications have done. A number of leading specialists in the field at that time were compelled to go on record and defend their positions on their chronological positions despite the clear evidence that settled the issue for a 587 date for the destruction of Jerusalem in that year, e.g., J. Philip Hyatt, "New Light on Nebuchadnezzar and Judean History" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 75 (1956): 277-84; Hayim Tadmor, "Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah" *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 15:4 (Oct. 1956): 226-30; William F. Albright, "The Nebuchadnezzar and Neriglissar Chronicles" *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 143 (1956): 28-33; David Noel Freedman, "The Babylonian Chronicle" *The Biblical Archaeologist* 19:3 (Sept. 1956): 50-60; Abraham Malamat, "A New Record of Nebuchadnezzar's Palestinian Campaigns" *Israel Exploration Journal* 6:4 (1956): 246-56; Edwin R. Thiele, "New Evidence on the Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah" *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 143 (Oct. 1956): 22-27.

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the 7th year of Nebuchadnezzar, which is according to a modern reconstruction of the Babylonian calendar is dated to 16 March 597 BCE.²⁴² The account reads:

In the **seventh year**, the month of Kislev, the king of Akkad mustered his troops, marched to the Hatti-land, and encamped against the city of Judah and on the **second day of the month of Adar** he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice, received its heavy tribute and sent (them) to Babylon.²⁴³

Again, it is to be noted that whether scholars who accept 586 BCE or 587 BCE for the fall of Jerusalem, they still are unanimous about this date for the first siege of Jerusalem, *i.e.*, 16 March 597 BCE.²⁴⁴ The Bible describes this event but there is a discrepancy concerning the year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. It states that Jerusalem fell in Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year — not his 7th:

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city, while his servants were besieging it. King Jehoiachin of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself, his mother, his servants, his officers, and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the **eighth year** of his reign (2 Kgs 24:11-12).

Now, to explain this discrepancy, scholars have resorted to tedious discussions about whether in the Kingdom of Judah years were counted from Spring-to-Spring or Fall-to-Fall, or whether they used a post-dating system versus an ante-dating method, and on and on.

²⁴² The Gregorian date of 16 March 597 BCE for the first capture of Jerusalem is enshrined in all scholarly publications as being the Julian calendar date equivalent to that event. That date has been determined by the Parker and Dubberstein reconstruction of the calendar of ancient Babylon. But have modern-day scholars asked the question as to whether these dates should be considered legitimate dates in the calendar used in ancient Judah? It would appear, no.

We must realize that the Priestly calendar had strict rules handed down from the time of Moses regarding the seven months of the Holyday season which the Babylonians certainly would not have had any reason to follow. Indeed, the Levitical priesthood would certainly never have had a calendar system that would have inserted a second Elul during the seven-month Holyday season. That would make, in such a year, the seventh month (Tishri) become the eighth month after Nisan which would have been completely unacceptable. Indeed, in the Levitical calendar, it was permissible to add an adjustment month just before the first month (Nisan) of the new year (a second Adar), which would be outside of the seven-month Holyday season. But such adjustments would never have occurred within that seven-month Holyday season from Nisan to Tishri. Indeed, even the days of the months during the Holyday season could only occur in the exact sequence of 30/29/30/29/30/29/30 (a period of precisely 177 days) without any deviations to that rule. Modern critics can disagree with this fact all they want, but the priests, who were in control of the calendar certainly knew in advance exactly when these new month days were to occur without the practice of new moon observation as did the Babylonians.

Also, realize that each of these "Festival" months were officially introduced by the blowing of trumpets (Num 10:10). For seven months the priests would blow trumpets on the first day of each month until Tishri. After the month of Tishri, it was no longer necessary to blow the trumpets., for the Holyday season was now over. Therefore, the blowing of the trumpets in the seventh month (Tishri) became then known as the "Last Trump" (Rev 11:15, 1 Cor 15:52, 1 Thess 4:16).

Therefore, we need to seriously take into consideration that the Parker and Dubberstein reconstruction of the calendar of Babylon should not in any way be the standard used to establish dates in ancient Judah. That reconstructed calendar reports that in the year of 598 BCE there was a first and a second month of Ululu before the month of Tashratu. These dates, therefore, are impossible for events in ancient Judah. Because of this fact, this author has had to rely on a reconstructed Hebrew calendar that was more in keeping with the rules of Leviticus 23 (see Appendix 3). Thus, if the date on the reconstructed Hebrew calendar occurred on 2 Adar, it would have occurred on 14 February 597 BCE (JD 1503 413) or for 2 Veadar, it would have been on 15 March 597 BCE (JD 1503 443). The date of 2 Adar 597 is, however, 16 March 597 (JD 1503 444) on the reconstructed Babylonian calendar of Parker and Dubberstein. Thus, after this long discussion, since the date comes from a Babylonian source, then the date of 16 March 597 BCE will be herein accepted date over the reconstructed Hebrew date.

²⁴³ BM 21946, rev. lines 11-13, Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 73.

²⁴⁴ Alberto R. Green, "The Chronology of the Last Days of Judah: Two Apparent Discrepancies," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101 (1982): 58, n. 4 observes: "This entry is by far the most exact information ever obtained from cuneiform records for an event recorded in the Bible. It provides us with the precise day for the surrender of Jerusalem — 2 Adar (March 16) 597, and gives us a fixed point of reference for the chronology of this period."

Nevertheless, what seems apparent is that the new evidence forces us to conclude that the regnal years of Nebuchadnezzar were dated one year later in the Judean records than in the Babylonian records.²⁴⁵ That is the only conclusion that one with all honesty could make. This must certainly be the explanation, and therefore, by necessity, would make Nebuchadnezzar's year one in Babylon paralleled with his father's year 21, an overlap of one year.²⁴⁶

Another explanation is that because in Babylon they counted years from Spring-to-Spring, but in Judah, it is envisioned that they counted years from Fall-to-Fall, then there would be a six month overlap between these two systems, thus accounting for the one-year difference.²⁴⁷

So, now we see the main problem. It is whether the Kings of Judah at this time in their history followed a Fall-to-Fall calendar or a Spring-to-Spring calendar. No one questions the fact that the Babylonians used a Spring-to-Spring calendar. But up until now, the case for a Fall-to-Fall calendar for Judah seemed to be plausibly advanced by Edwin R. Thiele,²⁴⁸ Abraham Malamat,²⁴⁹ K. S. Freedy/Donald B. Redford,²⁵⁰ and Gershon Galil,²⁵¹ to name a few scholars. But is this view correct? Let us hear from a noted advocate of the Fall-to-Fall position.

The siege of Jerusalem and the reign of Zedekiah terminated on the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year (II Kings 25:2-7; Jer. 39:2-7; 52:5-11). With spring-to-spring regnal years this would be July 29, 587, but with regnal years beginning in the fall it would be July 19, 586. In the first instance this would be in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, and in the second instance it would be his nineteenth year. The determination of the question as to whether Nisan or Tishri regnal years were used would settle the problem concerning the date of Nebuchadnezzar's final capture of Jerusalem.²⁵²

Did professor Thiele settle the problem with this explanation? No, he did not! Nevertheless he summarized the intricacy of this problem, and that it requires a full study to resolve it.

Before we get into the fine details of this problem, let us put aside these discussions for now and take a digression into the background of the events that led up to the fall of Jerusalem, begin-

²⁴⁵ B.M. 21946, *obv.* lines 1-2 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 67). Although this will be discussed fully later on, it appears that Nebuchadnezzar "took command" of the Babylonian army during his father's 21st year in 605/04, which was then counted as his accession year. Jack Finegan explains it this way: "In general, therefore, these references to the 'eighth year' and the 'nineteenth year' probably represent a view of Nebuchadnezzar's regnal years in terms of something like a non-accession-year system. In particular, they may represent a method of citing Nebuchadnezzar's regnal years which was used in Syria-Palestine where it was considered that he was already king (since he was really acting in that capacity) when he came for the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. and where, accordingly, 605/604 was counted as his first regnal year rather than 604/603. But what in this Syrian-Palestinian usage was called the eighth and nineteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar was in standard Babylonian usage his seventh and eighteenth years" (*Handbook*, 208).

²⁴⁶ Albright, "Neriglissar Chronicles," 32; Freedman, "Babylonian Chronicle" *Biblical Archaeologist* 19 (1956): 57; Martin Noth, *The History of Israel*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), 155.

²⁴⁷ Finegan, *Handbook*, (1998), 256. It will be shown why this explanation is to be rejected.

²⁴⁸ Thiele, "New Evidence," 23.

²⁴⁹ Abraham Malamat, "The Last Wars of the Kingdom of Judah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 9 (1950): 218-27.

²⁵⁰ Karl S. Freedy and Donald B. Redford, "The Dates in Ezekiel in Relation to Biblical, Babylonian, and Egyptian Sources," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 90:3 (July-Sept 1970): 462-85.

²⁵¹ Gershon Galil, "Babylonian Calendar and the Chronology of the Last Kings of Judah," *Biblica* 72 (1991): 368-78.

²⁵² Thiele, "New Evidence," 23. Thiele's dates are messed up. First of all the 9th day of the fourth month (Tammuz) was not when the Temple was destroyed, but merely the breach of the walls (Jer 39:2), which occurred on Friday, June 30th, 587 BCE (JD 1507 202). The actual date for the final Fall of Jerusalem was still a month away on Av 10 (Jer 52:12) viz. Sunday, July 30th, 587 BCE (JD 1507 232). Also, hypothetically Tammuz 9 in 586 BCE would have fallen on Wednesday, July 18th of that year (JD 1507 585) — not a Sunday, and clearly not a relevant date for this study.

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ning with the fall of Assyria and the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This not only will be informative but will help us get an appreciation of the events recorded in this newly discovered *Babylonian Chronicle*.

The Decline and Fall of the Assyrian Empire

Assyria in the first half of the seventh century BCE was a military power that was as strong as any Empire on the earth in its day. Consider the fact that in the year of 663 BCE the Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, was able to march onto Thebes in Egypt. He was able to vanquish that powerful nation. As a result of this victory, the Assyrian Empire had then reached from the upper Nile to the mountains of Armenia.²⁵³ But that fact turned out to be what eventually would be that nation's downfall. Assyria was not only way over-extended, but both the prophets Nahum and Zechariah at the same time could see Assyria's demise, and so predicted thus.²⁵⁴ And, accordingly, a half century later Assyria did finally collapse.

Scholars are completely puzzled and amazed at how soon the Assyrian Empire was so mighty in the mid-seventh century BCE, and then within a half-century had completely fallen. What these scholars do not realize is that a few years after Ashurbanipal's triumph in Egypt, in 660 BCE, the Assyrian queen Shammuramat, wife of Shamshi-Adad IV,²⁵⁵ personally commanded an Assyrian expedition into India, with the design of expanding their Empire further into the East. But as a result of that fateful adventure, the Assyrians lost two-thirds of their vast army in a battle with the Indians on the banks of the Indus River.²⁵⁶ Shammuramat was able to flee from the scene, but the result was so devastating on the Calah branch of the Assyrian kings, that they were never able to recover from that catastrophe.²⁵⁷

Sometime after that time (say 655 BCE), according to Herodotus, the Assyrian territories in Southern Palestine, specifically the city of Ashdod, were besieged by the Egyptians under pharaoh Psamstik I, for a period of 29 years.²⁵⁸ This show of strength by the Egyptians at this time is another indication that Assyria's hold on its Palestinian and Egyptian territories was collapsing.

²⁵³ See map of the Assyrian Empire in Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 146. And further read the Wikipedia account online at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashurbanipal> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

²⁵⁴ Neh 3:1-3; Zech 10:11.

²⁵⁵ In a future chapter, Assyrian history for this period will be restored and it will be shown that a collateral line of kings reigned in the city of Calah. Of this line of kings was Shamshi-Adad IV, who is to be correctly dated to 701-688 BCE. The queen of Shamshi-Adad IV was Shammuramat (Semiramis III), who envisioned herself as the self-styled, thrice born, reincarnation of the original Semiramis, the queen of Ninus of ancient Assyria. When Shamshi-Adad IV died (or was murdered), it was she who took the reigns of the throne in 688 BCE, since her son, Adad-nerari (III) was apparently too young to take his "seat on the royal throne" until his fifth year, in 683 BCE (*ARAB*, 734 [261]). Nevertheless, Semiramis was the real power behind the throne until the year of 660 BCE, when she and her son suffered a great defeat on a campaign in India. See Georges Roux, *Ancient Iraq* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1992), 301.

²⁵⁶ Not since the days of Sennacherib had Assyria suffered such an overwhelming defeat (2 Kgs 19:35).

²⁵⁷ The story is related by Diodorus Siculus, quoting Ctesias of Cnidus (*Library of History*, 2:16:1-2:20:5), online at http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Diodorus_Siculus/2A*.html#14 (accessed Mar. 9, 2022). Ctesias blended the story of Semiramis III with the original Semiramis, wife of Ninus. Scholars, of course, reject the entire story as pure fiction. Nevertheless, in Indian literature the year 660 BCE marked the end of the Bahadratha dynasty and the beginning of the Pradyota regime, no doubt due to losses of that very campaign (P. H. L. Eggermont, *The Chronology of the Reign of Asoka Moriya* [Leiden: Brill, 1956]). The Indian king was Arinjaya. Ctesias calls him Stabrobates (Diod., *Library* 2:17:4). For the next 38 years, the Calah dynasty in Assyria was ruled by inconsequential kings of whom we know little about until that dynasty disappeared in 622 BCE in a successful attack by the Babylonians.

Then, in the year 640/39 BCE, the pro-Assyrian king of Judah, Amon, after only a short reign of two years, was assassinated in a court intrigue by his own courtiers.²⁵⁹

Although the Assyrian Empire began to disintegrate stretching back as far as the year 700 BCE (the year in which the Medes completely freed themselves of Assyrian domination),²⁶⁰ the *limnu* lists show that from the mid-600's on Assyria was ravaged by plagues in the land, in addition to revolts that were flaring up in the cities of Calah, Ashur, and Nineveh.²⁶¹ From 660 BCE on the Assyrian Empire was declining due to its own internal struggles.

After the death of the last powerful Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal in 626 BCE, the Babylonians and Medes recognized that the internal strife within the Assyrian kingdom, and the absence of a powerful leader, was all that was needed to throw off Assyrian domination once and for all.

In 627 BCE the puppet ruler in Babylon, King Kandalanu (647-627 BCE), died. He had been set on the throne by the Assyrian King Ashurbanipal. Immediately thereafter intervened a kingless year before the accession of Nabopolassar. In that kingless year, the Assyrians tried to bring the Babylonians under control, but, alas, they were unable to stabilize the Babylonians. Out of that tumultuous period, however, Nabopolassar emerged to take over the reins of government in Babylon.

[14] For one year there was no king in the land. On the twenty-sixth of the month of Marcheswan (23 Nov. 626 BCE), Nabopolassar [15] sat upon the throne in Babylon. (This was) the 'beginning of reign' of Nabopolassar.²⁶²

[24] After Kandalanu, in the accession year of Nabopolassar, [25] there were insurrections in Assyria and Akkad. [26] There were hostilities (and) warfare continued.²⁶³

Thus, we see that the *Babylonian Chronicle* reveals that Nabopolassar acceded to the Babylonian throne during war and strife and persistent battles within and without the Empire. The Assyrians, also, at this were on the verge of total anarchy according to the *limnu* lists. Their days as a mighty Empire were crumbling and within two decades Assyria totally collapsed.

Babylonian Chronicle BM 25127 records events until the year of 623 BCE. Thereafter, there is a missing tablet for the years of 622-17 BCE. In the year of 623 BCE, the Assyrian city Der was defected.

In the west Josiah in 623 took advantage of the situation by annexing the Assyrian province of Samerina (2 Kgs 23:15-20), and carrying his cultic reforms to an extreme that might in earlier times have been interdicted by the Assyrian author-

²⁵⁸ Herodotus tells us that: "The reign of Psammetichus [I] lasted for 54 years, during 29 of which he was engaged in the siege of Azotus, a large town in Syria, until he finally took it. The siege of Azotus was the longest of any in history known to us" (Herodotus, *The Histories*, 2:57-60).

²⁵⁹ 2 Kgs 21:19-26; 2 Chr 33:21-25. "The murder of Amon was doubtless an anti-Assyrian repercussion of his foreign policy since the Bible unequivocally presents him as a loyal satellite of the Assyrian regime. In this respect, the Chronicler is most outspoken in describing Amon's devotion to Assyrian customs as being more extreme than that of his sire, Manasseh" (Abraham Malamat, "The Historical Background of the Assassination of Amon, King of Judah," *Israel Exploration Journal* 3 [1953]: 26).

²⁶⁰ The revolt of the Medes in 700-699 BCE gave rise to the House of Deioces (Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1:96).

²⁶¹ The *limnu* lists show plagues ravaged the land, most likely from diseases brought back from the Indian jungles after the Assyrian defeat in India.

²⁶² Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 51. Wiseman further noted that "the accession to the throne ended a period of one year when 'there was no king in the land.' This period was reckoned as 'after kandalanu' both by the Babylonian chronicler."

²⁶³ Sidney Smith, *Babylonian Historical Texts*, "Chronicle of Years B.C. 680-625, [BM 86379]" (London: Methuen & Co., 1924), 22-26. This tablet now goes by the designation of Chronicle 16, the "Akitu Chronicle," and is here quoted from Grayson, *Chronicles*, 132.

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ities. Probably Judah's response to the international situation is representative of what went on elsewhere in Palestine and Syria, as Assyrian garrison and governors were removed and the insignia of its hegemony destroyed.²⁶⁴

In 622 BCE Nabopolassar was able to drive out the Assyrian garrison from the city of Nippur. If we had a continuation of the chronicle, it would have told us that in the year of 621 BCE the city of Calah capitulated to Nabopolassar's forces and its ruling dynasty in the person of Ashur-nirari V had collapsed.²⁶⁵

Dropping down to 616/15 BCE when the *Babylonian Chronicle* picks up again [BM 21901], we see that the situation had only gotten worse. In that year, the tenth year of Nabopolassar, the Babylonian army was on the march up the Euphrates, into the Khabur valley. The Babylonians were successful in throwing off Assyrian forces south of the city of Haran, even though the Assyrians were fortified by a contingent of Egyptian forces.²⁶⁶

In Nabopolassar's 11th year (615/14 BCE), the Babylonians besieged the ancient Assyrian religious center of Ashur, but without success. The Babylonians retreated down the Tigris to Tikrit. The Assyrians attacked Tikrit for 10 days, only to end in a stalemate. Both armies returned home to fight another day.

Thereafter, news came of a new threat to the Assyrians in the form of the Median army coming down to the province of Arraphu and capturing it. Now Assyria faced two foes. And a third foe also loomed on the horizon who likewise wanted a piece of the Assyrian Empire: the Scythians. No wonder the Assyrians appealed to the Egyptians for military support. They were beginning to be outflanked on every side.

In Nabopolassar's 12th year (614/13 BCE) the Median army, led by the Median King Cyaxares (624-584 BCE), made a direct assault on the Assyrian capital, Nineveh, but were apparently beaten back (*Chronicle* broken off at this point). The Medes then marched down the Tigris River and besieged the city of Ashur. What the Babylonians could not achieve, the Medes did. They captured the city and plundered its wealth. The Babylonians arrived too late for the battle.

[28] [The king of Ak]kad and his troops, who had come to the help of the Medes, did not reach the (scene of) the attack (until) the city [was (already) taken].²⁶⁷

Since the Medes were victorious in capturing Ashur, needless to say, that Nabopolassar had no choice but to ally with the Medes. He certainly knew that together they would be able to crush the Assyrians and divide the spoils among themselves.

[29] [The king of Ak]kad and Ky[axar]es met one another by the city (of Assur). They established (an alliance) of mutual friendship and peace (*i.e.* were reconciled). [30] [Kyaxar]es and his army returned to his land; the king of Akkad and his army returned to his land.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), 445-46.

²⁶⁵ Modern scholars have incorrectly placed Ashur-nirari V as preceding Tiglath-pileser III. However, the *limnu* lists show that prior to the end of Ashur-nirari's reign there were revolts in Calah showing a decline in the rulership of that city, which fits the situation in the late 600's BCE far better than 124 years earlier.

²⁶⁶ It is interesting that the Egyptians, who were subjugated by the Assyrians in 663 BCE, were now allying with the Assyrians. Pharaoh Psammetichus I had cast off the Assyrian yoke by 654 BCE, but apparently, now he could see an even bigger threat with the Medo-Babylonian alliance.

²⁶⁷ BM 21901, *obv.* 28 (Wiseman, *Chronicle*, 57).

²⁶⁸ BM 21901, *obv.* 29-30 (Wiseman, *Chronicle*, 59).

The Babylonian historian Berossos (third century BCE) recorded that this alliance between the Babylonians and the Medes was cemented by a marriage of the Babylonian crown prince Nebuchadnezzar and Amytis, the daughter of Cyaxares' son, Astyages:

Then Saracus (Sin-sarra-ishkun, 622-612 BCE) became king of the Assyrians, and when he was informed that an army like a swarm of locusts had invaded by sea,²⁶⁹ he immediately sent his general Nabopolassar (625-604 BCE) [Busalos-sorus] to Babylon. But this general started to plot rebellion, and betrothed his son Nebuchadnezzar (604-561 BCE) [Nabuchodonosor] to Amytis the daughter of Astyages (584-549 BCE), the king of the Medes. And then he immediately set off to attack the city of Nineveh. When king Saracus learned of the attack, he burnt down the palace with himself inside it. Nebuchadnezzar took over power as king, and put up a strong wall around Babylon.²⁷⁰

Concerning Cyaxares, the classical historian Herodotus (*ca.* 480-430 BCE) informs us that the Median leader

Phraortes reigned for twenty-two years (646-624 BCE) and was succeeded by his son Cyaxares (624-584 BCE), grandson of Deioces (699-646 BCE)...

The first act of his (Cyaxares') reign was to march against [the Assyrian capital] Nineveh²⁷¹ at the head of all his subject nations, with the object of destroying the town and avenging his father [who had been killed during a campaign against the Assyrians].²⁷² He fought a successful battle against the Assyrians, **but while he was besieging the town he was attacked by a large Scythian army** under the command of king Madyas, son of Protothyas... A battle was fought, in which the Medes were defeated and lost their power in Asia, which was taken over in its entirety by the Scythians.²⁷³

From this account we can see that while the Medes were besieging Nineveh, out of the Bactrian Mountains arrived the Scythians to strengthen Assyrian forces. The Medes attempted to fight them off but fighting on two fronts proved fruitless. The Medes could not afford to lose their fight with the Assyrians, so they had no choice but to make a treaty with the Scythians at the expense of the Assyrians. If the Scythians would break their truce with the Assyrians and throw in with the Medes, then the Medes were willing to give them all of the upper regions of the Assyrian territories. The Scythians accepted the accord. As a result, Nineveh collapsed. The cost to the Medes? Control of upper Asia for a period of 28 years (612-584 BCE).²⁷⁴

Assyria's fate was now sealed. They no longer had the military strength to overpower the Medo-Scytho-Babylonian coalition. The Assyrians knew that if the Egyptians could not aid them, then their fate was a foregone conclusion. The final siege of Nineveh is described as follows:

38 [the fourteenth year]: The king of Akkad mustered his army [and marched to ...] The king of the Umman-manda 39 [marched] 38 towards the king of Akkad 39 [...] ... they met one another. 40 [The k]ing of Akkad ... [...] Cy]axares ... brought

²⁶⁹ This unnamed army is assumed to be the Medes, but would they come by Sea? And if it were the Medes, why wouldn't they have been named? This passage has all the characteristics of the invading Scythians from the north, the Umman-manda of the Babylonian Chronicle (so C. J. Gadd, *The Fall of Nineveh* [London: The British Museum, 1923], 14-15). Indeed, the account of Herodotus below confirms this deduction.

²⁷⁰ Berossos, as quoted by Alexander Polyhistor and Abydenus *apud* Eusebius (*Armenian Chronicle*, ed. Josef Karst), 5. That Nebuchadnezzar married Cyaxares' granddaughter, Amytis (*ca.* 630-565 BCE), appears to be a full generation out of sync. Indeed, it makes more sense that Cyaxares would have given his own daughter in marriage to Nebuchadnezzar.

²⁷¹ This "first act" of his reign apparently didn't occur until 10 years after Cyaxares was seated on his throne.

²⁷² This would have occurred in the year of 624 BCE. Curiously, the *Babylonian Chronicle* records no such battle between the Medes and the Assyrians in that year or any year surrounding this date.

²⁷³ Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1:103 (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), 83-84.

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across and 41 they marched along the bank of the Tigris [... they encamp]ed against Nineveh. 42 From the month Sivan until the month Ab — for three [months — ...] ... 43 they subjected the city to a heavy siege, they inflicted a major [defeat upon a g]reat [people]. 44 At that time Sin-sharra-ishkun, king of Assyria, [died] ... [...] ... 45 They carried off the vast booty of the city and the temple (and) [turned] the city into a ruin heap [...] 46 of Assyrian escaped from the enemy and ... the king of Akkad ... [...] 47 On the twentieth day of the month Elul [10 August 612] Cyaxares and his army went home.²⁷⁵

Nineveh, capital of the Assyrian Empire, fell in the 14th year of Nabopolassar, datable to the year 612 BCE.²⁷⁶ The siege went on for three months. Finally, the city was taken on 10 August 612 BCE, looted, destroyed, and its King Sin-sharra-ishkun, embroiled himself in the flames of the burning city. Jack Finegan noted:

The defeated king was Sin-sharishkun, and the once proud city was turned into a mound of ruins. Diodorus (2.27) adds the information that Nineveh (which he calls Ninus) finally fell only when the river (which he calls the Euphrates instead of the Tigris) rose to an unusual height and broke down a long stretch of the city's walls and that, at this juncture, Sardanapallus (as he calls Sin-sharishkun) burned himself to death in his palace. The destruction described by Zephaniah (2:13-15) and Nahum came to pass, and the fate the Assyrians had visited upon Thebes was returned in full upon Nineveh (Nah 3:8f.).²⁷⁷

Donald Redford's assessment is also worthy of comment:

In 614 Cyaxares and his Median troops suddenly overwhelmed the city of Ashur, and then signed a treaty of alliance with Nabopolassar. In May 612, the combined forces of Babylon, Media, and the Scythians finally laid siege to Sin-shar-ishkun, the Assyrian king, in his capital at Nineveh. In August of the same year the city fell, as Sin-shar-ishkun immolated himself within his palace, and was given over to merciless plunder and destruction. Although a remnant of the royal family under the crown prince Ashur-uballit II escaped to the west and set up a government in the exile in Harran, Assyria as a nation-state ceased to exist, and few if any shed tears of regret.²⁷⁸

The fulfillment of Zephaniah's prophecy had come to pass:

And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and he will make Nineveh a desolation, a dry waste like the desert. Herds shall lie down in it, every wild animal; the desert owl and the screech owl shall lodge on its capitals; the owl shall hoot at the window, the raven croak on the threshold; for its cedar work will be laid bare. Is this the exultant city that lived secure, that said to itself, "I am, and there is no one else"? What a desolation it has become,

²⁷⁴ Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1:106. Donald B. Redford (*Ancient Times*, 440-41) takes a different view on the date of the 28 years, believing that the year 612 BCE marked the end of that period, rather than the beginning of it. Notice: "the datum of twenty-eight years for their domination stands out prominently. ... Twenty-eight years before the fall of Nineveh in 612 would bring us to 641-40, the twenty-fourth year of Psammetichos I; and interestingly it is this same exact year that Eusebius in his chronicle adds the terse statement 'Scythii usque ad Palestinam penetraverunt' (*Heironymus Chronikon* [ed. Helm], p. 96; R. Labat, *Journal Asiatique* [1961], 1-12)." Redford is clearly wrong. It is apparent that Herodotus included the 28-year period within the reign of Cyaxares II, which ended in 584 BCE, exactly 28 years from the year of the fall of Nineveh. Redford's 28-year period only partially covers the reign of Cyaxares. Obviously, Astyages was no longer bound by any agreement his father was under and threw off the Scythian dominance upon his succession to the Persian throne in 584 BCE.

²⁷⁵ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 95.

²⁷⁶ Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 15-16.

²⁷⁷ Jack Finegan, *Archaeological History of the Ancient Middle East* (New York: Dorset Press, 1979), 124-5. Finegan further noted that "the mention in Nah. 1:8 of an 'overflowing flood' may reflect the fact stated by Diodorus that a flood of the river [Tigris] contributed to the fall of Nineveh," 387 (fn 9).

²⁷⁸ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 446.

a lair for wild animals! Everyone who passes by it hisses and shakes the fist (Zeph 2:13-15).

The cities long ago built by Nimrod, Nineveh, Ashur, and Calah (Gen 10:11-12), were now all pummeled into dust. The nation that sent Israel into captivity was finally punished for its sin. Nahum had prophesied this:

Your shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria; your nobles rest in the dust, your people are scattered on the mountains, and no one gathers them. Your injury has no healing, your wound is severe, all who hear news of you will clap their hands over you, for upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually? (Nah 3:18-19).²⁷⁹

What Happened to Assyria's Last King, Ashur-uballit II?

With the death of the Assyrian King Sin-sharra-ishkun, and no heir apparent, the remaining Assyrian forces fled under the leadership of an Assyrian noble (conceivably a brother to Sin-sharra-ishkun) who certainly had grand designs of restoring Assyrian supremacy.²⁸⁰

Ashur-uballit II and his forces were able to retreat to the Assyrian provincial capital, Haran, which still remained firmly under Assyrian control and had formidable defenses. He appealed to the Egyptians to help him beat back the Babylonian coalition forces.

With the aid of the Egyptians, Ashuruballit was able to defend the city of Haran throughout the year of 612 BCE. As long as the Egyptians had surrounded the city of Haran, Nabopolassar refrained from a direct assault on the city. He merely did mop-up operations in the hill country, looting and subjugating the local population for the next three years. The Babylonians simply played the game of waiting out the Assyrians for a better opportunity to strike the city.

Meanwhile, Nabopolassar decided to set up a local base of operations in the vicinity of Nineveh. Thus, in the year of 611 BCE, the Babylonians record that they campaigned in the Upper Euphrates areas, without attacking any areas actually defended. During the summer months of 610 BCE, the Babylonians continued to plunder and quell unrest in the region. Nevertheless, the Babylonians were still reluctant to attack Haran as long as the Egyptians remained defending the city.

However, the Egyptians could not stay in Syria indefinitely and had to return to Egypt in 610 BCE, partly due to the observance that the aged Pharaoh Psammetichus I had died and a new Pharaoh, Necho II, had ascended the throne of Egypt.

At last, Nabopolassar's waiting game had paid off. In November of 610 BCE, after the Egyptians vacated the area, the Assyrians were vulnerable to a Babylonian thrust into Haran. The Babylonians, and their Median allies, besieged the city of Haran. Again, the Assyrian forces were overwhelmed and had to retreat further west; this time retreating across the Euphrates to the city of Carchemish. The Babylonians then decimated the city of Haran. Nabopolassar, victorious, returned to Babylon with booty, plunder, slaves, and no doubt a triumphal parade, and, of course, to reinforce his army with fresh troops and horses.

²⁷⁹ Remember that the city of Nineveh was regarded as fictional until archaeologists dug it up in 1845, which is a tremendous testimony to the power of these prophecies.

²⁸⁰ He took for himself the throne name of Ashur-uballit, no doubt in recognition of an early Assyrian king by that name who was known for defeating the Mitannian King Shuttarna II and marked the beginning of Assyrian hegemony throughout the Mesopotamian area. Unfortunately, his aspirations did not realize a similar outcome.

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We now come to the most crucial year in the history of the Assyrians, Judeans, and Babylonians. It was the summer of 609 BCE. Ashur-uballit II once again received the Egyptian support that he had hoped would help him sustain a victory over the Babylonians.

Assur-uballit, supported by a large Egyptian force, recrossed the Euphrates in an attempt to recapture Harran. ... For almost two months, until Elul [June to August], Assur-uballit maintained the siege but without success.²⁸¹

The Assyrian campaign to recapture Haran ultimately failed when the main Babylonian army, under the leadership of Nabopolassar, arrived. Nevertheless, Ashur-uballit again was forced to retreat back to the city of Carchemish.²⁸² His fate after that is unknown, since at this point in time the Assyrian king, Ashur-uballit, ceases to be mentioned in the *Babylonian Chronicle*, and he disappears henceforth in all the extant historical records. Thus, from this point on, the Assyrian Empire is considered to be vanquished and lay prostrate at the superior forces of the king of Akkad.

Thus 609 BCE marks the end of one of the greatest Empires of the ancient world — the Assyrian Empire. It once stretched from the highlands of Persia to the southern borders of Egypt. It existed from the time of Nimrod, a period of some 1600 years of human history. Some of the greatest kings of ancient history, Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser the Great, Sennacherib, Ashurbanipal, were now ghosts of an Empire of lost memory. And it was crushed and brought down by the victorious armies of the Babylonians and their Median allies.

The Egyptian Support for Assyria

We should now inquire about the Egyptians who came in support of the Assyrians. Did they make it in time to aid the Assyrians, or not? It would seem that the Egyptians never did make it in time to help the Assyrians. It is at this point that the Bible relates a story that justifies this conclusion.

Prior to the Egyptians reaching the Assyrians, the Bible records that the Judean King, Josiah, attempted to thwart the Egyptian's march north. The large Egyptian army that aided the Assyrians was none other than that of the newly crowned Pharaoh Necho II, who marched through the Kingdom of Judah in King Josiah's 31st year.²⁸³

In his (Josiah's) days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. King Josiah went to meet him; but when pharaoh Neco met him at Megiddo, he killed him (2 Kgs 23:29).

A richer and much fuller account is found in 2 Chronicles:

After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, King Neco of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him. But Neco sent envoys to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today, but against the house with which I am at war, and God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, so that he will not destroy you." But Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Neco from the mouth of God, but joined battle in the plain of Megiddo. The archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am badly wounded." So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in

²⁸¹ Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 19.

²⁸² Albright, "Neriglissar Chronicles," 29.

²⁸³ Note that the King James translation of 2 Kgs 23:29; 2 Chr 35:20, makes it appear that Necho was marching "against" the king of Assyria and against the city of Carchemish. Modern translations, such as the NRSV, simply says "went up to."

his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was buried in the tomb of his ancestors (2 Chr 35:20-24).

The date of Josiah's encounter with Pharaoh Necho II was in the Spring of 609 BCE.²⁸⁴ After the Assyrians and Egyptians were defeated by the Babylonians, the Egyptians returned to Egypt with no further hostilities mentioned in the *Chronicle* until August of 607 BCE. Obviously, Necho must have made some kind of truce with Nabopolassar at the expense of Ashurballit II. The disposition of the agreement is implied by a statement by Berossos:

When Nabopolassar, father of Nabuchodonosor, heard that the governor **whom he had set over Egypt** and over the parts of Colesyria and Phoenicia, had revolted from him, he was not able to bear it any longer; but committing certain parts of his army to his son Nabuchodonosor, who was then but young, he sent him against the rebel Nabuchodonosor joined battle with him, and conquered him, and reduced the country under his dominion again.²⁸⁵

Scholars believe that Necho, by the strength of his superior military might, was in total control of Syria. But in reality, this account reveals that Necho II had sold out to the Babylonians and became nothing more than a Babylonian satrap who was temporarily given the areas of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia in exchange for his non-support of the Assyrians. However, there was no way that Necho wished to remain in such a subordinate situation indefinitely.

Even before the campaign to regain Haran was over, Necho had set up a seat of rule in the city of Riblah in Syria. Obviously, he knew that the Assyrian Empire was a done deal and could not maintain their weakened condition for very long. The only thing that he could do was to throw his lot in with the Babylonians as a vassal — a compromise in which he was certainly not going to remain in for very long. The Babylonians also knew that eventually, they would have to deal with the Egyptians and drive them back to Egypt. Such a state of affairs could not last for very long. By the year 605 BCE the situation finally came to a head, as we shall see below.

Why Did Josiah Intervene in International Affairs?

Why the young Judean king, Josiah, chose to intervene in Necho's march north to aid Ashurballit is not explained in Scripture. The Egyptians had marched through Judah previously without incident:

When Assyrian power was collapsing, Pharaoh Necho II of Egypt, intent on preventing Babylonian seizure of the Levant, marched north in 609 B.C.E. It is usually assumed that Josiah tried to prevent Necho from aiding the Assyrians and that the Judean army met the Egyptians in battle at Megiddo. However, Josiah does not seem to have objected when Egyptian forces passed through his territory in 616 and 610 B.C.E. So it has been argued that Josiah might have gone out of his fortress at Megiddo intending to support Necho's march into Syria. Presumably, problems developed only after Josiah met the pharaoh.²⁸⁶

The idea of Josiah wishing to support the Egyptians in 609 BCE is a baseless conjecture. Previously to 609 BCE, Egyptian military strength was stronger and Judah's was no doubt weaker. It

²⁸⁴ This remarkable chronological agreement with both the Hebrew text and secular sources is a reassuring piece of evidence that both sources are right on track.

²⁸⁵ Berossos, *History of Ancient Times*, apud Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 1:19 [§§134-36], Whiston, 781).

²⁸⁶ William H. Stiebing, Jr., *Ancient Near Eastern History and Culture* (2d ed.: New York: Pearson Education, Inc., 2009), 306.

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would have been military folly for Josiah to engage the Egyptians prior to this time. The assessment of M. B. Rowton is far more convincing:

Assyria was the mortal enemy of Israel, and Josiah's motive becomes crystal-clear if we assume that he was fully aware of the vital importance of delaying the Egyptian advance. In that case he proceeded to Megiddo knowing only too well the risk involved but in the hope that, by forcing Necho to deploy his forces, he would have effectively sealed the doom of the Assyrian king. Thus, it seems very probable that the last of the great Jewish kings laid down his life in a truly heroic and entirely successful bid to avenge the dreadful wrongs his nation had suffered at the hands of Assyria.²⁸⁷

Another assessment to consider is that since the year of 612 BCE, the Scythians also were a force to be contended within the area, and may have kept Judah in check:

Another factor which undoubtedly affected Josiah's decision in 609 was Egypt's military weakness, so conspicuously demonstrated a short time previous to the Battle of Megiddo by the invasion of the Scythian tribes, which attacked the Egyptian border. The chronology of this incident, related by Herodotus (i, 105), can be determined on the basis of Gadd's Chronicle, which tells of the appearance in about 612 of the tribes of Umman-Manda, whose identification with the Scythians is generally accepted. These tribes together with the Babylonians conquered Haran in 610, as mentioned above, and approached the Euphrates. At this point in the Babylonian Chronicle (1, 65) there is a lacuna. But we may assume that the Scythians continued their march west to Syria and Palestine, arriving in Philistia still during the reign of Psamtik [I], as reported by Herodotus. It appears that at that time the Scythians did not invade Judah. The threat of such an invasion is only implied in some prophecies.²⁸⁸

We cannot escape the fact that in 609 BCE Josiah wanted to stall the Egyptians so that they would arrive too late to help the Assyrians. But there is no reason to believe that in so doing, his action placed him as a pro-Babylonian ally.²⁸⁹

Thus, the year 609 BCE is one of those years in ancient history that goes down as one of the most significant years in the entire Biblical world at that time. It was a collision of five great world powers, with no less than five world leaders mentioned in the extant texts: Ashuruballit II of Assyria, Nabopolassar of Babylonia, Cyaxares of Media, Josiah of Judah, and Necho II of Egypt.

With this backdrop, we will now proceed with establishing a true date for the Fall of Jerusalem. It was necessary to appreciate the dramatic events of this period that led up to this point. We now are at the crucial year of 609 BCE. It is this pivotal year that marks the beginning of what scholars call "The Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah."²⁹⁰ A careful analysis of this period is

²⁸⁷ M. B. Rowton, "Jeremiah and the Death of Josiah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 10 (1951): 129.

²⁸⁸ Malamat, "The Last Wars," 219-20. See also Abraham Malamat, "The Historical Setting of Two Biblical Prophecies on the Nations." *Israel Exploration Journal* 1:3 (1950-51): 157: "In the meantime, Psamtik [I] died (is his death connected with his surrender to the Scythians?). The new Pharaoh, Necho, dispatched urgent military aid to the remnants of the Assyrian army in the vicinity of the Euphrates. ... Perhaps the Egyptian humiliation at the hands of the Scythians a few weeks before is one of the reasons for the Judean kings' audacity in making a stand against the Egyptian army."

²⁸⁹ Malamat ("Last Wars," 219) stated: "It is clear that Josiah's attempt to detain the Egyptian army at Megiddo came to prevent that Egyptian military assistance. Josiah's action allies Judah with Babylon; perhaps it even signifies a phase of a broad strategic plan, a military alliance between Babylon and Judah." Interesting supposition, and we will leave it at that.

²⁹⁰ Malamat, "The Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah" in *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987), 287-314; "The Last Kings of Judah and the Fall of Jerusalem." *Israel Exploration Journal* 18:3 (1968): 137-56; B. Oded, "The Last Days of Judah and the Destruction of Jerusalem (609-586)" in *Israelite and Judean History*, ed. John H. Hayes and James Maxwell Miller (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 469-76.

needed to answer the question of when Jerusalem fell. We now proceed looking into the dramatic events of this most intriguing period in Biblical history.

The Last Days of the Kingdom of Judah

As mentioned, the significance of the date of 609 BCE in Biblical history cannot be understated. The death of the young 39-year-old King Josiah in the Spring of that year is an important chronological benchmark of such huge importance that it is worthy of further scrutiny.

Josiah was the son of King Amon and grandson of King Manasseh. The Biblical assessment of Manasseh was:

Manasseh misled Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that they did more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the people of Israel (2 Chr 33:9).

The nations that “the Lord had destroyed” were the Assyrians during the time of King Hezekiah. Yet, Manasseh dismantled all the religious reforms of Hezekiah. He abrogated the Temple services which Hezekiah and Isaiah had restored. He robbed the Temple furniture. He even stripped the Temple of some of its masonry and ceiling rafters to use in other building projects. In the end, the Temple was nothing more than an empty hulk of what it had been (2 Chr 34:8-11). By the end of Manasseh’s over a half-century rule (697-642 BCE), the religion of Moses had virtually disappeared.

Manasseh embraced and zealously promoted the Canaanite cults and their trappings. Altars to Baal were erected and the image of Asherah was everywhere, even within the holy temple of Yaweh itself. The arts and practices of sorcery, divination, witchcraft, spiritist, and necromancers all reappeared in Israel in the days of Ahab and Jezebel. Manasseh even offered his own sons in the Valley of Hinnom to Molech as human sacrifices! This was a deliberate, but total, abandonment of righteousness as set forth in the law and in prophets such as Isaiah and Hosea. Now the criteria that had brought judgment to Samaria would apply to Judah’s capital Jerusalem.²⁹¹

At the end of Manasseh’s reign, the Chronicler [Ezra] tells us that he was taken by the king of Assyria (Ashurbanipal, 668-627 BCE) to Nineveh, which caused him to repent of his sins, and thereafter, he was restored to power (2 Chr 33:11-13).

Manasseh’s end of life repentance, however, had no effect on his son and successor, Amon,²⁹² who the Bible describes as being even worse than his father in the sight of the Lord:

Amon ... did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images that his father Manasseh had made, and served them. He did not humble himself before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself, but this Amon incurred more and more guilt (2 Chr 33:21-23).

After two years of Amon’s depravity, his own courtiers finally had enough of his total debauchery and had him assassinated. But then, these conspirators themselves became the victims

²⁹¹ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age through the Jewish Wars* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 382.

²⁹² It is believed by some that Amon’s name was in honor of the Egyptian god, Amun, so Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000-586 B.C.E.* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 168. Nevertheless, Amon curiously named one of his sons “Josiah,” a person prophesied to bring Judah back to spiritual purity (1 Kgs 13:1-3).

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of a reprisal from the “People of the Land” (*Am ha-Aretz*).²⁹³ They, in turn, placed Amon’s son on the throne, a mere boy of eight years of age. His name was Josiah.

As it turns out, Josiah became one of the most remarkable personages of the entire Hebrew Scriptures. Even though his father and grandfather had been two of the vilest kings of the Judahite Kingdom, Josiah became a principled man of extraordinary character. He was born in an environment of heathen depravity, yet he rose to an exceptional righteous character that rivaled and surpassed that of his great-grandfather, Hezekiah, and even King David. Indeed, the Bible states that

Moreover Josiah put away the mediums, wizards, teraphim, idols, and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, so that he established the words of the law that were written in the book that the priest Hilkiah had found in the house of the Lord. **Before him there was no king like him**, who turned to the LORD with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; **nor did any like him arise after him** (2 Kgs 23:24-25).

Josiah was even the object of a prophecy going back to the days of Jeroboam I:

While Jeroboam was standing by the altar to offer incense, a man of God came out of Judah by the word of the LORD to Bethel and proclaimed against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, “O altar, altar, thus say the LORD: A son shall be born to the house of David, **Josiah by name**, and he shall sacrifice on you the priest of the high places who offer incense on you, and human bones shall be burned on you.” He gave a sign the same day, saying, “This is the sign that the LORD has spoken” “The altar shall be torn down, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out” (1 Kgs 13:1-3).

When Josiah was thrust onto the political scene in Judah, he was a mere boy of eight years of age. He was therefore surrounded by courtiers who instructed him of his status, his heritage, and his political destiny. By the time he was sixteen, he began to seek out the God of his ancestor David (2 Chr 34:3a). Two years later, he was old enough to exercise his royal authority. He commissioned that the Temple, which lay practically in ruins, be repaired, and restored to its former splendor. At this point, there was a religious revival among the people.

In the twelfth year of his reign (628/27 BCE) Josiah began a vast purging project of driving out all forms of pagan worship. Afterward, he extended his purging efforts into the former territories of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, as far as the tribes of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and Naphtali (2 Chr 34:3b-7).²⁹⁴

The very next year, in Josiah’s year thirteen (627/26 BCE), the Prophet Jeremiah began his 40-year prophetic ministry, from the 13th year of Josiah to the 11th year of Zedekiah (Jer 1:1). This date is another important time reference that is needed in order to help us resolve the overall chronology of this vital period (Jer 25:3).²⁹⁵

The year of 627/26 BCE was also the year that there was a revolt in Babylonia, and the rise of the powerful king, Nabopolassar. This may explain why Josiah was able to make such sweeping reforms wherein he threw off the pagan practices of the Assyrians without reprisals. The civil war

²⁹³ The “Am ha-Aretz” appears to be a kind of landed gentry of privileged brokers that wielded political power within the royal court. See Joseph P. Healey, “Am ha’aretz,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, David N. Freedman, ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1:168-69-11.

²⁹⁴ 2 Kgs 23:19 calls this area “the cities of Samaria.”

²⁹⁵ Curiously, this ever so important 40-year period is for some reason left out of scholarly discussions as to when Jerusalem fell. Nevertheless, 627 BCE - 40 = 587 BCE.

that the Assyrians were engaged in gave Josiah the needed relief and hopeful look that the Assyrian Empire might just come to its demise by the Babylonians.²⁹⁶

According to the Babylonian Chronicle, Sin-shar-ishkun and Sin-shum-lishir revolted against Assur-etel-ilani in 627 B.C.E. By 626 Nabopolassar, king of the Babylonian marshland, had joined the war. In the same year he and Sin-shar-ishkun, when Assur-etel-ilani's army posed a serious threat to them both, appear to have agreed to recognize each other as kings of Babylon and Assyria respectively. The events allowed Josiah gradually to assert his independence and extend the reform into the former territory of the kingdom of Israel.²⁹⁷

Meanwhile, as repairs to the Temple were going about, an event of tremendous importance occurred. Hilkiah, the High Priest (son of Shallum) stumbled upon the preserved original text of the official Torah Scroll tucked away in the "Holy Place" of the Temple. Immediately Hilkiah understood the tremendous importance of this major find and had it sent to the king by his servant Shaphan. Shaphan was granted an audience with the King. He read the Book of the Law to the king for several days. When Shaphan got to Leviticus 26, Josiah carefully noticed the blessings and cursings warned about in that chapter (especially verses 14-33). These warnings were reiterated in Deuteronomy 28.

Josiah took heart and immediately rent his clothes as a sign of repentance to himself and for the people of Judah (2 Chr 34:19). He realized that his ancestors had violated the warnings of Leviticus 26. He said

for the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us is great, because our ancestors did not keep the word of the LORD, to act in accordance with all that is written in this book (2 Chr 34:21).

Josiah requested that Hilkiah the Priest go to the prophetess Huldah. She replied in the first-person speech of prophets that God

will indeed bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the curses that are written in the book that was read before the king of Judah. Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to their gods, so that they have provoked me to anger with all the works of their hands, my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched. But as the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him: Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me, and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, says the LORD. I will gather you to your ancestors and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace; your eyes shall not see all the disaster that I will bring on this place and its inhabitants" (2 Chr 34:24-28).

According to this account, Josiah's repentance occasioned a sort of provisional truce concerning the curses that were to befall the nation of Judah. As long as Josiah lived, peace and safety would be promised to the people of Judah and Samaria. The operative words here are "as long as Josiah lived." The people of Judah received the news with great joy. After all, Josiah was still a young man, and the curses of Leviticus 26 seemed to be put off for another 40 or even 50 years into the future.

²⁹⁶ Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, "Josiah's Revolt against Assyria," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12 (1953): 56-58.

²⁹⁷ Robert Althann, "Josiah," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3:1016.

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This news made the rumblings of the wars that were going on in the North between Assyria and Babylonia would thus be looked at as something that would not affect the people of Judah. Indeed, it would appear that Josiah, unfortunately, took this promise as some kind of divine protection concerning his own life. However, the truth is that Josiah had a responsibility to conduct his life in a judicious and sensible manner and not entangle himself with these wars of these nations.

Nevertheless, in the late Spring of the year 609 BCE, a vast army of Egyptians marched northward to rendezvous with the Assyrian forces in Carchemish, in a desperate attempt to help the Assyrians fight off the Babylonian coalition.

When Josiah heard of the Egyptians advancing through his borders to help the Assyrians, he threw out all caution and reasoning. He did not want the Egyptians to arrive in time to help the Assyrians. Josiah undoubtedly wanted the Babylonians to crush the Assyrians who annihilated the Northern Kingdom of Israel and sent its people into captivity.²⁹⁸ If only he could at least stall the forward advance of the Egyptians, led by Pharaoh Necho II, the Egyptians would arrive too late to aid the Assyrians, and that might turn the tide in favor of the Babylonians.

Josiah acted immediately and gathered his forces to hastily arrive at the city of Megiddo in the north before the Egyptians got there in order to block their advance northward.

When Josiah arrived at Megiddo, the Egyptians had still not arrived. Josiah took off his royal apparel and disguised himself as an army regular. He left his royal chariot in exchange for a regular combat chariot. For some reason, he decided that he did not want to negotiate with Pharaoh Necho in person.

Josiah must have felt that he had God's divine protection and had nothing to fear. Even when Pharaoh Necho tried to dissuade him by sending a message that he was on a mission from God and that the Jewish king should not interfere with God's plan. Josiah must have felt that God was on his side, not on the side of some pagan Egyptian. How dare this Egyptian pagan tell Josiah about God's plan — indeed that God was even on the side of the Egyptians! Josiah's reasoning certainly was capricious and unfortunately downright reckless.

When Necho's forces arrived on the scene at Megiddo and saw that he was blocked by the army of Josiah, he

sent envoys to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today, but against the house with which I am at war (Babylonians); and God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, so that he will not destroy you." But Josiah would not turn away from him, but disguised himself in order to fight with him. He did not listen to the words of Necho from the mouth of God, but joined battle in the plain of Megiddo. The archers shot King Josiah; and the king said to his servants, "Take me away, for I am badly wounded." So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him in his second chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was buried in the tombs of his ancestors (2 Chr 35:20-23).

Josiah was severely wounded and did not die immediately. He was forced to suffer the long rigorous ride from Megiddo back to Jerusalem, blood oozing from his body. And in those last painful moments of his life, he knew that he had not only acted foolishly and incautiously but that he had failed his people and his God. We can only imagine that Josiah's last unrecorded words may

²⁹⁸ So, M. B. Rowton, "Jeremiah and the Death of Josiah," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 10 (1951): 129.

have been some kind of “death bed” repentance, but it was to no avail. By the time that the Judean army returned that night to Jerusalem, the people could see the lifeless body of their beloved king.

The totally unexpected death of the revered king of Judah thrust the nation into a total state of shock. The prophecy of Huldah, that Josiah would die in peace, evaporated in an instance. No one saw this coming.²⁹⁹ But more important was the realization of the dismal prospect that the decades of divine protection had vanished into thin air. The people of Judah were stunned in utter disbelief, and they suffered real pain over this horrific consequence.

With the death of Josiah, the certainty of peace and protection collapsed. Nothing lay in their future but drought, plague, invasion, captivity, and death. Indeed, the curses of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 were now doomed to fall upon the people of Judah, and the people fully well knew it. No wonder that the Bible declares that “all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah” (2 Chr 35:24).

It is at this point that the prophet Jeremiah began prophesying about the imminent captivity of Judah. Also, Jeremiah composed a special Book of Lamentations:

Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah, and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these a custom in Israel; they are recorded in the Laments (the Book of Lamentations) (2 Chr 35:25).³⁰⁰

Josephus also notes that at this time the *Book of Lamentations* was composed by Jeremiah:

But all the people mourned greatly for him, lamenting and grieving on his account many days; and Jeremiah the prophet composed an elegy to lament him, which is extant till this time also.³⁰¹

The 70-Year Prophecy

Jeremiah’s so-called 70-year prophecy (Jer 25:9-12) should now be examined. Does it commence with the time of Josiah’s death in 609 BCE? A number of scholars believe that it does. Why? Because it just so happens that there are exactly 70 years between this date and the date of the fall of the Babylonian Empire in 539 BCE. The prophecy does say that

²⁹⁹ Jeremiah himself lamented: “Her prophets obtain no vision from the LORD” (Lam 2:9) and “Our eyes failed, ever watching vainly for help” (Lam 4:17).

³⁰⁰ The *Book of Lamentations* is to this day the only book ordained to be sung (or read) each year on the anniversary of the burning of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar. Modern scholars place the writing of the *Book of Lamentations* after the Fall of Jerusalem, apparently because of the vivid imagery presented of the siege. They deny that Jeremiah could have foreseen this with such exacting precision, even though Jeremiah was a prophet of God (so Delbert R. Hellers, “Lamentations” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 4:140). However, the Talmudic Jews, writing about the authorship of various Biblical books, recognized that: “Jeremiah wrote the book which bears his name, the Book of Kings, and Lamentations” (*Babylonian Talmud: Tractate Babal Bathra*, Folio 15a).

³⁰¹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.5.1 [§78] (Whiston, 271). T. C. Mitchell inaccurately concludes: “Josephus claimed, some centuries later, that Jeremiah’s lament was still extant in his own time (*Ant.* x.78). There is no reason to connect it with the Biblical *Book of Lamentations*” (“The Reign of Josiah” in *Cambridge Ancient History*, 3:2:391). But of course, there is reason to connect Jeremiah’s Lamentations with the Biblical *Book of Lamentations*! No other book other than the canonical *Book of Lamentations* survived to the time of Josephus, because there is no proof that any other book of Lamentations ever even existed. Jeremiah, who had no love for King Zedekiah, certainly would not have affectionately referred to him as “the breath of our nostrils” and “he of whom we said, ‘Under his shadow, he shall live among the nations’” (Lam 4:20). Yet, S. K. Soderlund, after reviewing all the evidence concluded: “In short, it appears that the internal evidence marshaled against the Jeremianic authorship of Lamentations is far from conclusive” (“Lamentations,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Geoffrey W. Bromily, ed., 3:66).

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after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says the LORD, making the land an everlasting waste (Jer 25:12).

However, in the immediate aftermath of Josiah's death, Judah did not serve the king of Babylon, but rather the Egyptians for another four years. Secondly, the prophecy directly mentions Nebuchadnezzar as the instrument that God used to punish Judah, but Nebuchadnezzar had nothing to do with the Battle of Megiddo. Thirdly, and most importantly, is the fact that this prophecy was given in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (601 BCE), a full eight years after the Battle of Megiddo in 609 BCE, yet, when it was given, it was foretold as a future event from that point on. The prophecy, therefore, was to commence at the destruction of Judah at the time of Zedekiah, as will be shortly demonstrated.

The Kingdom of Judah after Josiah

In the aftermath of King Josiah's death chaos in the land of Judah quickly ensued. Now, the people were in great confusion, perplexity, but mostly fearsome for their future. The oldest son of Josiah was the 25-year old Eliakim (later Jehoiakim), who was ready to take his father's place on the throne. However, a political party, known as the *Am ha-Aretz* (People of the Land), once again felt they had to intervene in the political affairs of succession. They had a problem with Eliakim because of his apparent pro-Egyptian disposition. So, they took a bold step in overriding the custom of the firstborn to succeed the throne and placed Eliakim's younger brother, the 23-year old Shallum, on the throne instead. Shallum's throne name became Jehoahaz.

Josiah's successor, King Jehoahaz, came to the throne through a minor *coup d'état* in Jerusalem, as revealed indirectly in the bible. Jehoahaz was 23 years old at his accession, while his brother Jehoiakim, who in turn succeeded him three months later, was already 25 and thus held priority of succession. This is the obvious reason behind the surprising intervention of the '*am ha'arez*' in the accession of Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:30; 2 Chron. 36:1); this body, loyal to the Davidic line, normally came into play in times of crisis, especially when the continuity of the line was in question. It was undoubtedly within its power to pass on the kingship by overruling the principle of primogeniture. In this respect there is also significance in the specific mention of the anointing of the king (Jehoahaz), a point stressed in the Bible only in instances of founders of dynasties or of contested successions.³⁰²

If the *Am ha-Aretz* party thought that they had pulled one over on Pharaoh Necho, they had another thing coming. It only took three months (Tammuz, Ab, and Elul) before Necho summoned Jehoahaz before his Syrian headquarters in Riblah.

Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. He did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, just as his ancestors had done. Pharaoh Neco confined him at Riblah in the land of Hamath, so that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and imposed tribute on the land of one hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. Pharaoh Neco made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz away; he came to Egypt, and died there. Jehoiakim gave the silver and

³⁰² Malamat, "The Last Kings," 139-40. Malamat further notes: "Indeed, in Talmudic literature we find that 'a king, the son of a king, is to be anointed only in the case of contestation ... Jehoahaz because of Jehoiakim who was older by two years' (Jer. *Harayoth* 3, 47; Bab. *Harayoth* 11b)."

the gold to pharaoh, but he taxed the land in order to meet Pharaoh's demand for money. He exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land (*Am ha-Aretz*), from all according to their assessment, to give it to pharaoh Neco (2 Kgs 23:31-35).

Thus ended the inconsequential three-month reign of the 23-year-old son of Josiah, Jehoahaz, in the month of Elul, 609 BCE. He was taken to Egypt as a captive and the spoils of victory were put on display as part of his glorious triumph over the Judeans. The older brother, Jehoiakim, at last took his rightful place on the throne of Judah (the *Am ha-Aretz* Party being over-ruled), and he reigned for a period of 11 years (2 Kgs 23:36).³⁰³

The Babylonian Chronicle and the Bible

It must be noted that the history that has been reviewed up to this point is totally consistent with the Biblical text. This is a very important point because what we are dealing with is to check the historical veracity of the Biblical record and what we know from the *Chronicle* and Josephus. The historical dates established heretofore are in exact conformity with the ancient documents of Babylonia and the Jewish historian Josephus, as well as the Bible itself.

And from this information we know that the year 609 BCE coincided with King Josiah's year 31 and Nabopolassar's year 17.³⁰⁴ Simultaneously, the 17th year of Nabopolassar included the three-month reign of King Jehoahaz and the accession year of King Jehoiakim. The question is: did all of these events occur within the same calendar year in Judah? This is where all the scholarly debate centers. This we will pursue further on, however, now let us continue with the record of the *Babylonian Chronicle*.

From August 609 BCE to August 607 BCE, the *Babylonian Chronicle* records no conflicts with the Babylonians and Egyptians. In the year of 607 BCE, the 19th year of Nabopolassar, we read of the crown prince Nebuchadnezzar for the first time, who musters his own army and, along with his father Nabopolassar, campaigns in the mountains of northern Mesopotamia during the month of Sivan (May). In the month of Tammuz (June) Nabopolassar returned to Babylon, while Nebuchadnezzar remained in the field doing mop-up operations until the month of Elul (August).

At this point in time both the Babylonian King Nabopolassar and the Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar are back home strategizing an overall plan for the ensuing months. Their main objective, of course, was to ultimately drive out the Egyptians from Syria. This required a broad overall strategic plan and required no less than a ground game aimed at deceiving the Egyptians. This is a fact that no secular scholars have proposed but is one that will make overall sense once we look at the facts.

The Brilliant Babylonian Plan to Recapture Syria

In the month of Tishri (September), 607 BCE, Nabopolassar returned to the field. He leads his army up the Euphrates lifeline but stops short of Carchemish — the strongly held city in the hands of the Egyptians. But besides Carchemish, it is apparent that the Egyptians had already made inroads south of Carchemish, and had also taken a city called Kimuhu. It was obvious to the Baby-

³⁰³ It should be noted here that the three months of Jehoahaz's reign is another vital clue to resolving the chronology of this period. The three months Tammuz, Ab, and Elul of 609 BCE, it will be shown, helps us resolve the important question as to whether the calendar in Judah at that time functioned on a Spring-to-Spring basis or a Fall-to-Fall basis.

³⁰⁴ Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 45.

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Ionians that the Egyptians were attempting to build up a supply chain route headed south directly into Babylonian territory.

The Babylonians obviously could see what the Egyptians were up to. They not only needed to dismantle the Kimuhu outpost but saw an even greater advantage in their overall plan in so doing. After a campaign of four months, Nabopolassar did in fact recapture Kimuhu. He then stationed garrison troops there, and then returned to Babylon in Shebat (January, 606 BCE). But as normal as this may all seem, the Babylonians had actually set a trap that the Egyptians readily fell into. Here is the beauty of the Babylonian strategy.

Nabopolassar knew that the Egyptians would retaliate and try to recapture Kimuhu. In fact, it was essential that the Egyptians were drawn back down the Euphrates and were kept occupied with a military campaign there. It appears that Nabopolassar saw an opportunity to outmaneuver the Egyptians in a brilliant ground game that should be one of the greatest military strategies of all time.

It was now the Spring of 606 BCE, the 20th year of Nabopolassar, and the 3rd year of King Jehoiakim. True to form, in the Spring of that year the Egyptians were obliged to recapture Kimuhu. This engaged their forces for a period of four months (Sivan-Elul, *i.e.*, May-August).

But where was the king of Babylon, Nabopolassar? And where was the Crown Prince Nebuchadnezzar during this four-month siege? The *Chronicle* is suddenly silent — it only states that Nabopolassar goes north in Tishri (September) but stops short of Kimuhu, and camps at Quramati.³⁰⁵ He then sent detachments from there across the Euphrates to capture towns, otherwise unheard of. What was Nabopolassar up to? And where was the Crown Prince, Nebuchadnezzar, all of this time? He is not mentioned in the *Chronicle* for the entire year. What we are witnessing here is that something is going on behind the scenes that goes beyond just a simple military campaign. The Babylonians were obviously up to something, but what was it? Hang on to your seats because here is what surely must have been the Babylonian strategy.

We know that Nabopolassar only went as far as Quramati. But why? It is obvious that he did so in order to establish a beachhead on the west bank of the Euphrates, which connected to an old trade route directly through Aramean territory. Why is it important to understand this fact? Because this was a shortcut into Syria/Palestine that bypassed Carchemish which the Egyptians held and went directly through the desert straight into Damascus.

Nabopolassar obviously was working on an overall strategy that would ultimately drive out the Egyptians from Syria/Palestine. But before he could do that, he needed to make sure that the areas east of the Egyptian lifeline along the coast were secured. Thus, he initiated a covert operation that circumvented Egyptian intelligence. So, in this respect, it was obvious that he had to lure the Egyptians back to Kimuhu. They were thus then detained in a struggle over that city for a period of four months. The Egyptians did in fact take back that city. But this Egyptian victory only lulled them into a false sense of victory. The Egyptians — completely oblivious to Nabopolassar's overall plan — foolishly believed that they now had the Babylonians on the run.

Indeed, the Egyptians, confident over their defeat of Kimuhu, went even further down the Euphrates to Quramati, the same city that Nabopolassar had earlier “pitched his camp.” But when they got there, instead of resistance “the Babylonian army withdrew quickly and retreated.”³⁰⁶

³⁰⁵ Scholars believe that Quramati may “lie in the vicinity of the modern Raqqa, by the junction of the Euphrates and Balikh rivers where lay the ford which served the trade route to Damascus via Palmyra” (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 23).

Why on earth would the Babylonians retreat? This was still part of the brilliant strategy of the Babylonians. The Egyptians were now even further lulled into believing that the Babylonian forces were not all that strong after all and that they must have retreated due to superior Egyptian forces. But as far as the Babylonians were concerned, the Egyptians fell right into their trap as planned.

With the Egyptians now feeling victorious over their recent successes, they now were confident that victory over the Babylonians was certainly within their grasp. However, little did they know that the time they wasted in taking back Kimuhu was all a part of a brilliant strategy on the part of Nabopolassar. And the Egyptians were remarkably fooled into falling right into Nabopolassar's trap.

Not only were the Egyptians duped by the Babylonians, but today, modern scholars are equally fooled as to what was really going on. Yes, indeed, scholars are baffled at the fact that Nabopolassar did not go further up from Quramati onto Kimuhu, no less even to Carchemish itself, to drive out the Egyptians. In fact, modern historians see this as a sign of weakness on the part of the Babylonians. The fact that the year previous, we see Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar in the field together, and then this year, there is not even a mention of Nebuchadnezzar, is a fact that has scholars perplexed.

Having disposed his troops in a defensive position Nabopolassar returned to Babylon in Shebat (January/February 605 B.C.). This was the last time he was destined to lead his army in battle. Very soon afterwards, the Egyptian forces took the initiative, for they crossed the Euphrates at Carchemish and marched down the left bank towards the Babylonians at Quramati. The latter had already **displayed their weakness** by failing to advance upstream in order to recapture Kimuhu, and they now moved off before the enemy made contact with them. Their retreat may have been due, in part, to **lack of leadership**, for there is no record that the crown-prince remained with the army after Nabopolassar's return to Babylon.³⁰⁷

Notice that Wiseman believes that the movements of the Babylonians in the year of 606 BCE only displayed "weakness" and "lack of leadership." Nonsense! Wiseman totally missed the fact that the Babylonians were actually following a far greater and ingenious stratagem. And what was that greater stratagem? The unrecorded events of Nebuchadnezzar for that year (missing from the *Babylonian Chronicle*) are astonishingly preserved by no less than the Prophet Daniel:

In the *third year* of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah [606 BCE], King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. The Lord let King Jehoiakim of Judah fall into his power, as well as some of the vessels of the house of God. These he brought to the land of Shinar, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his gods (Dan 1:1-2).

Once again, the Bible comes to the rescue of what was going on historically in that very crucial year of 606 BCE. Remember, Nebuchadnezzar campaigned with his father in the previous year and was in the field the following year. It would be indeed strange if he now simply stayed home for some unknown reason for an entire year, right at the point in Babylonian history where he would be needed more than ever. But modern-day scholars dismiss the testimony of Daniel as a later book that has no bearing on the events contemporary with his day. They consider the *Book of Daniel* as later Jewish propaganda. But does this sound like propaganda or does it sound like

³⁰⁶ B.M. 22047, rev., line 26 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 67).

³⁰⁷ Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 23 (emphasis mine).

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sound history? So, in rejecting the testimony of Daniel, modern scholars are at a loss to explain historically what was happening with the Babylonians and the Egyptians at this time.

What really happened in the year of 606 BCE is that while the Egyptians were busy battling along the Eastern shores of the Euphrates, Nebuchadnezzar had cut into the Syrian dessert by way of an old Damascus trade route, all the way down as far as Jerusalem itself. What was incumbent on Nebuchadnezzar is that he had to make sure that there were not going to be any surprises from Judah that would upset his plans, like in the days of Josiah. Thus, we need to further explore why this campaign into Jerusalem was so important to Nebuchadnezzar's overall brilliant strategy.

Why Was Jerusalem Important to Nebuchadnezzar?

Why was Jerusalem important? Because only a few years earlier the king of Jerusalem (at that time Josiah) interfered with Pharaoh Necho's designs to advance north. Nebuchadnezzar not only needed to prepare the Syrian coast for an immense invasion the following year, but he could not afford to have any interference by the Judean king in his bid to take over the region. Scholars have completely misunderstood the events regarding what the Babylonians were doing at this time because they have dismissed the all-important testimony of the prophet Daniel. Once again, the Bible fills in the details in a way that secular history has left blank. And as a result, scholars have missed one of the greatest details in the history of this period due to their anti-Biblical bias.

Rather than a show of weakness and lack of leadership, strategically, the Babylonians ingeniously came up with a brilliant and masterful chess play that modern scholars have overlooked. The Egyptians had no realization that they were actually check-mated. While Egyptians thought they had the upper hand along the Euphrates, this was only a divergent tactic to bluff the Egyptians into believing in their own superiority.

Josephus gives us further corroboration of this view. When discussing the Battle of Carchemish the following year he mentions something very interesting that most scholars have overlooked.

So the king of Babylon passed over Euphrates, and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, **excepting Judea**³⁰⁸

Wait a minute, "EXCEPTING Judea?" Did the reader catch that? Has this important detail been missed by everyone down through the centuries? Isn't it time to start paying attention to this extremely important fact? The reason why Josephus said "excepting Judea" is because Judea/Judah had previously been subdued the year previous by Nebuchadnezzar, as the prophet Daniel had accurately recorded. Thus, Judah was securely already within the domain of Babylonian hegemony. Indeed, are we to believe that Nebuchadnezzar occupied "all Syria," but had not already secured Judah? Nebuchadnezzar remembered how Judah interfered with Assyrian affairs in Josiah's day. It would have been the height of military folly for him to ignore Judah at this time. All of this information is crucial to comprehending the chronology of this important year.

Scholars who normally reject Daniel as historical, nevertheless support a calendar that begins in the Fall using Daniel, the first chapter, to straddle Jehoiakim's third and fourth year, in order to justify their chronological theory. It does not! The *Babylonian Chronicle* supports the fact that Jehoiakim's third year was distinct and had nothing to do with the Battle of Carchemish the fol-

³⁰⁸ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6:1 [§86] (Whiston, 272).

lowing year. And when we properly understand these events, then we can appreciate the fact that a year beginning in the Spring in Judah is actually demonstrated by the text of Daniel 1:1.

Most critical scholarship, of course, not only rejects the testimony of this verse but believe that the entire *Book of Daniel* is a complete historical fabrication, supposedly concocted during the Maccabean era (167 BCE - 37 BCE). Nevertheless, this verse stands as a lucid account of a preliminary campaign conducted by Nebuchadnezzar into southern Syria the year before the Battle of Carchemish. Since scholarly assessment fails to take this fact into consideration, they misunderstand the events of 606 BCE, as witnessed above by their woeful analysis of the events. Abraham Malamat, although accepting this verse as historical, however, seems compelled to emend it to say "In the sixth year" instead of the "third year." Why? Was it to strengthen his own personal chronological schemes?³⁰⁹ Of course it was, despite any substantiating evidence.

It is because scholars have rejected the testimony of Daniel 1:1, besides the fact the years were counted in Judah on a Spring basis at this time, that they cannot explain exactly when it was that Nebuchadnezzar actually first took Jerusalem. Notice this confused deduction by one of the most leading scholars on the subject:

Babylonia soon subjugated Judah although the exact date is still disputed. Even Nebuchadnezzar's Chronicle, which records his annual military campaigns to the west from 605 to 601, remains vague as to the precise date, since it fails to specify the names of the tributary kingdoms (except Askelon; cf. below). Some scholars, relying on evidence in the opening of the book of Daniel and in Josephus (quoting Berossus), surmise that Judah was conquered immediately after the battle of Carchemish. It is difficult, however, to accept the chronological veracity of these traditions which are unsupported by the Babylonian Chronicle.³¹⁰

But the testimony of Daniel and Josephus perfectly agree with the chronological veracity of the *Babylonian Chronicle*, once we get our facts straight. Let's move on to see why.

The Battle of Carchemish

We come now to the year of 605 BCE, it was the scene of the famous Battle of Carchemish wherein Nebuchadnezzar defeated the Egyptians in Syria. It was also in this year that Jeremiah dictated his first scroll of prophecies to Baruch, his scribe, dated to the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer 36:1). Thus, we are on firm ground in understanding that the Spring of the year 605 BCE was year 21 of Nabopolassar, year four of King Jehoiakim, and the "accession year" of King Nebuchadnezzar. And it is in this very year that the famous Battle of Carchemish occurred.³¹¹

Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, must have been in a physically ailing situation, for he could not take to the field, but had to remain in Babylon due to his advanced age and failing health.³¹² Nevertheless, the battle with the Egyptians could not wait. Nebuchadnezzar was now

³⁰⁹ Malamat, "Last Kings," 142.

³¹⁰ Malamat, "The Last Years," 290.

³¹¹ It seems to this author an incredible oversight that a recently published popular book entitled: *Battles of the Bible, 1400 BC-AD 73*, by Martin Dougherty, et. al. (see bibliography) never even mentioned this important Biblical battle. Indeed, this book also passed over Josiah's encounter with the Egyptians, and Nebuchadnezzar's campaign 605 BCE just discussed. Conceivably, these are probably the most important battles in all of Biblical history.

³¹² Although the *Chronicle* does not tell us this fact, Nabopolassar could also have been suffering from old battle wounds from which he had never recovered.

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prepared already to finally take full command of all Babylonian military units. Everything was in place for a monumental year in Babylonian history.

Meanwhile, the Egyptians must have realized by now that they had been the victims of Nebuchadnezzar's superior strategy. One can only visualize Necho's dismay. He was thoroughly duped the year before and must have now realized that he spent considerable time and resources in wasted campaigns that now put the Egyptian army in a compromised position.

Indeed, Pharaoh Necho could now see that while they thought that they were defeating the Babylonians along the Euphrates the year before, they nonetheless were drawn into battles that were clever maneuvers on the part of the Babylonians that kept them occupied, while Nebuchadnezzar was already in the Eastern part of Syria/Palestine bringing that area under his control for an overall takeover of that entire region. The Egyptians were now in a very precarious situation that left them surrounded by superior Babylonian forces. Indeed, Necho had to break off his military campaign and retreat back to Egypt to regroup and bring in mercenaries to help his cause.

It was now the Spring of 605 BCE. Nebuchadnezzar once again was on the march. He advanced straight up the Euphrates with little, if any Egyptian resistance:

The Egyptians must have withdrawn from the towns of Kimuhu and Quramati which they had but recently captured for there is no record of further engagements at these two places and it is unlikely that so large a Babylonian force would have allowed any enemy garrison to remain on its line of march.³¹³

Okay, scholars, so how do you explain that circumstance? Wiseman is the very scholar who said that Babylonians the year before were basically incompetent to the superior Egyptian forces. So, if that were true, then why would the Egyptians have withdrawn from the towns of Kimuhu and Quramati? It is because modern scholars rejected the testimony of Daniel the Prophet, that their ridiculous theories fall flat on their faces. Indeed, what happened to the Egyptians who had taken the cities of Kimuhu and Quramati the year before? Scholars are silent on this because they haven't a clue. But they could have known if they did not reject the testimony of the *Book of Daniel*.

The truth of the matter is that the Egyptians must have now realized that they had been part of a colossal Babylonian subterfuge that would cost them control of the Levant. Whereas the year before they were confident that the Babylonian resistance was so weak that they were able to chase the Babylonians down the Euphrates as far as Quramati with just a few garrison troops from Carchemish. But now, the very next year was another story. The Egyptians had pulled back from the cities that they had captured and retreated back to Carchemish. Why? Can modern scholars explain why the Egyptians would have left the area along the Euphrates unopposed for Nebuchadnezzar's army? No, they cannot!

Back in Egypt, Necho knew that he had been tricked and humiliated on the Euphrates. His only recourse now was to assemble a huge army, which even included mercenaries from Greece, in preparation for the next year's final confrontation with the Babylonians.

Undoubtedly April 605 BCE witnessed the mustering of the Egyptian army and its march north. The army was a large one and besides Egyptians included the various auxiliary forces of which Saite Egypt could boast: **Nubians, Libyans, and Ionian Greeks**.³¹⁴

³¹³ Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 23.

³¹⁴ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 453 (emphasis mine).

Notice that these so-called “auxiliary forces” contained “Nubians.” These Nubian contingents were nothing less than a parallel dynasty ruling alongside Egypt’s 26th dynasty of Sais in a subordinate role. What dynasty was that? It was the 19th dynasty of Thebes. Ramesses II may have fought alongside of his rival Pharaoh Necho II (more likely not). Modern scholars would not identify the 19th dynasty as Nubian, but indeed it was.

Excursus: What Ever Happened to Necho’s Inscriptions?

We pause here to pursue a very important side-bar in not only Egyptian history, but in Biblical history as well. The so-called “Ramesses the Great,” — the Ramesses II³¹⁵ of Manetho’s 19th Dynasty of Egypt — did not live in the 13th century BCE, as modern scholars would have us believe — but rather from 610 - 544 BCE. And astonishingly, he came to the throne in the city of Thebes in the exact same year as Necho II (610-595 BCE) of the 26th Dynasty, who ruled out of the city of Saïs.³¹⁶

The so-called “Battle of Kadesh” that Ramesses II had supposedly fought in was actually the “Battle of Carchemish.” But the objection would be that in the Battle of Kadesh there was no mention of two pharaohs conducting that battle, as well in the Battle of Carchemish — only one pharaoh, Ramesses II. The reality is that these two battles were one and the same. It was Necho II that fought the battle of Carchemish, as history tells us, while Ramesses II remained in Egypt busy with his building projects. Then, later after the death of Necho, Ramesses II claimed Necho’s victory.

But since Ramesses II far outlived Necho II, does anyone really believe that this vainglorious Pharaoh Ramesses II would actually give the true victor of the Battle of Carchemish — Necho II — the glory? No way! Absolutely not! All evidence points to the fact that Ramesses II was as egocentric a maniac as any self-conceited ruler in history. The real history is the so-called Battle of Kadesh of Ramesses II’s murals were in fact that of the Battle of Carchemish at the time of Nebuchadnezzar.³¹⁷ Ramesses eclipsed the history of Necho and arrogated the victories of Necho for himself. Once that fact is understood, then we can finally understand what happened to Necho’s own inscriptions.

Books on Egyptian history tell an extensive story of Necho (II)’s wars against Nebuchadnezzar, but this story is based on the rich material of the Scriptures; his other activities are described with the help of information gleaned from

³¹⁵ There are many different ways that modern scholars have chosen to spell the name of Ramesses. This author has settled on Ramesses (as well as Wikipedia). However, if one is doing a search on his name on the world wide web, the other accepted options are “Ramses,” or “Rameses.”

³¹⁶ Even though scholars will be on the floor laughing their heads off at such a statement, the evidence of this fact will be thoroughly presented in volume 2 of this series. Indeed, modern-day scholarship is so off base that they place the accession of Ramesses II some 668 years before his true accession. That is the magnitude of the problem that modern scholars have created in destroying the true timeline of the history of ancient Egypt. These two dynasties were undoubtedly related by royal blood. Scholars have never bought into the idea of parallel dynasties in Egypt. The reason is because modern-day scholars have been fooled by the ancient historians, such a Manetho the Heliopolitan priest, who derived what he wrote based on what he was told by earlier Egyptian priests of his day.

³¹⁷ Dr. Hoeh explains: “Ramesses the Great was a contemporary of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon! The king of Hatti whom Ramesses fought at Kadesh was the Chaldean king Nebuchadnezzar. At the rise of Babylon to a world power, Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Hatti — the ancient name of Syria, Palestine, and a portion of Asia Minor. The site of the battle of Kadesh, which Ramesses made so famous in his monuments, was not a city on the Orontes River in Syria, but the famous city of Carchemish. Kadesh is a Semitic word for “holy.” Kadesh was a holy city. A number of cities in the ancient world bore the name Kadesh because they were holy places. Carchemish was famous — as was Jerusalem — as a holy city. The Greek name of Carchemish was Hieropolis, meaning Holy City” (*Compendium*, 1:165-66).

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Herodotus. Egyptian inscriptions have been searched for mention of a pharaoh named Necho and of his campaigns. Egyptian archaeology could not supply the story of the long war. ...

It is strange indeed that in the annals of Egypt no account has been found of the long war between Nekau-Wehemibre and Nebuchadnezzar; no record of the civic activities of Nekau-Wehemibre is extant; no law published in his day has been found; no temple built by him has been unearthed; no written scroll discovered; no mummy or coffin. Judged by the Egyptian material, he must have been a ruler of few achievements. But then how could he have been a match for Nebuchadnezzar for almost a generation? How could he have succeeded in making the Palestinian kings, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, believe that he would be able to free Palestine from the yoke of the mightiest monarch Babylon had ever known?³¹⁸

Good questions indeed because the obvious answer is that the records of Necho II were expunged from history by his contemporary Ramesses II. But how is that possible when Ramesses lived centuries earlier than Necho. Indeed, that is just the point. Ramesses actually outlived Necho.

Ramesses the Great was not the greatest of the pharaohs, but no doubt he aspired to be. He built a lot of temples, had a lot of huge statues made of himself, and chiseled his name on many statues of his predecessors. But he only fought one major battle and though he got a lot of mileage out of his claimed victory, clearer insights into his inscriptions suggest he was lucky to get out of it alive.³¹⁹

As far back as the turn of the 20th century noted scholars like E. A. Wallis Budge remarked:

Owing to a number of misconceptions on the part of the Egyptologists who flourished in the first half of the XIXth century, it has been generally supposed that the period of the Ramessids marked the culminating point of Egyptian civilization, power, and influence, but this was not the case, for, as we have seen, Egypt reached the zenith of her power under the truly great kings of the XVIIIth Dynasty. Thothmes III. and Amen-hotep III. deserve the title "great" far more than Ramesses II. The XIXth Dynasty marks the beginning of the decline of the power of Egypt, and the decline continued without break until the end of the period of the XXIst Dynasty, by which time Egypt had become like the "bruised reed" to which she was compared in Holy Scriptures ("Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it; so is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, unto all that trust on him." — 2 Kings xviii. 21).³²⁰

Consider this: If Necho's inscriptions were overwritten by someone after him, who after him would dare do such a thing to this great hero within his recent memory? You have to realize that Egypt collapsed only 70 years after Necho's death. Who could have expunged Necho's accomplishments during that time other than Ramesses II?

But because of modern-day scholars' chronological false assumptions, they have no clue as to why Necho's inscriptions are absent from the monuments. Therefore, they are forced to come up with some other explanation as to why Ramesses' inscriptions were carved so deep. Here is one such explanation that attempts to justify their position:

³¹⁸ Immanuel Velikovsky, *Ramses II and His Time* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1978), 3-4.

³¹⁹ John Ashton and David Down, *Unwrapping the Pharaohs: How Egyptian Archaeology Confirms the Biblical Timeline* (Forrest, Ark.: Master Books, 2007), 169. These authors further state that Ramesses II "was Egypt's most prodigious builder of temples and statues. Those which he did not build, he hacked the builders' names off of and inserted his own," *ibid.*, 170. Surely, does anyone think that this vainglorious Ramesses II would allow Necho II to be the Pharaoh triumphant after he had already a reputation of usurping to himself to be the builder of previous temples?

³²⁰ E. A. W. Budge, *A History of Egypt* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1902): 6:32.

Ramesses decided to eternalize himself in stone, and so he ordered changes to the methods used by his masons. The elegant but shallow reliefs of previous pharaohs were easily transformed, and so their images and words could easily be obliterated by their successors. Ramesses insisted that his carvings be deeply engraved into the stone, which made them not only less susceptible to later alteration, but also made them more prominent in the Egyptian sun, reflecting his relationship with the sun deity.³²¹

This is just made up theorizing. This author hasn't the slightest evidence to back up what he is saying. Obviously, this imaginative explanation is more evidence of a modern interpretation to justify a false chronology of Egypt which is an invention of modern scholarship.

It is also obvious that we can see that this author is here admitting that shallow inscriptions could be tampered with. Okay, well if that is the case, then could not Ramesses himself have tampered with the inscriptions of Necho? Of course, he could; most certainly! Ramesses didn't carve his inscriptions deep because he was trying to prevent his own inscriptions from being tampered with. He carved them deep because he was doing what this author believes possible of others of doing. Indeed, the real reason as to why we have no inscriptions of Necho II on the monuments was that Ramesses II was doing what this author was unwittingly describing what others were doing.

Ramesses II, the "Great," has given the archaeologists many a hard nut to crack. Apparently his vanity was even greater than his passion for building. He never hesitated to deck himself in borrowed plumes: posterity would marvel at the great builder Ramesses II. And, indeed, it did. The experts could hardly grasp at first how it came about that on so many temples and public buildings and in other places they came upon the cipher "Ramesses II." But when they examined the buildings a little more closely, the explanation was plain. Many of these buildings must have been built centuries before Ramesses II. To pander to his own vanity, however, Ramesses II decided to have his monogram carved on them all.³²²

Ramesses II (correctly dated to 610-566 BCE) stripped the monuments of Necho's name, replaced them with his own name, and took credit for Necho's victories on the monuments.³²³ Indeed, where on the monuments are the exploits of pharaoh Necho II, pray tell? There are none because they were obliterated by Ramesses II who took credit for Necho's victories, which he appropriated to himself. This is the real reason why there is no mention of Necho's glorious exploits. Yet the Bible and Herodotus record the victorious adventures of Necho II, but not the least mention of Ramesses II. Why? Because Ramesses was a lesser nobody pharaoh who most likely stayed back in Egypt building grand temples for himself. Nevertheless, modern scholarship has willingly bought into this deception.

Nebuchadnezzar Versus Necho — the Real Story

The stage was now set for the two strongest powers of the early seventh century Levant to collide in a huge conflagration. However, while Nebuchadnezzar was still in the field, word came

³²¹ See online "Ramesses II," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramesses_II (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

³²² Werner Keller, *The Bible as History* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1956), 107. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* further confirms: "The king was quantitatively the greatest Egyptian builder, and the Ramesseum (called the tomb of Osymandias by Diodorus, after the second, official name of Ramesses II., User-ma' [t]n-rê'), with its colossal statues, the temples at Luxor, Abydos, Abu Simbel in Nubia, etc., belongs to the grandest constructions of ancient Egypt; **many other monuments, however, were only usurped by this indefatigable builder,**" W. Max Miller, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, online at <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/12553-ramesses> (emphasis the author's, accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

³²³ Modern scholars blissfully and willingly swallowed this ruse, because if they didn't, they would be announcing to the world that their reconstruction of ancient Egyptian chronology is nothing more than a colossal failure.

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to him that his father, Nabopolassar, had died on Abu 8 (15 August 605 BCE).³²⁴ Nebuchadnezzar immediately rushed back to Babylon. He now ascended the throne of Babylon on the first day of the month, Ululu (7 September 605 BCE). The *Chronicle* refers to this year as Nebuchadnezzar's "accession year."³²⁵ The *Babylonian Chronicle* vividly relates the details of what happened next:

[1] In the twenty-first year the king of Akkad stayed in his own land, Nebuchadnezzar his eldest son, the crown-prince, [2] mustered (the Babylonian army) and took command of his troops; he marched to Carchemish which is on the bank of the Euphrates, [3] and crossed the river (to go) against the Egyptian army which lay in Carchemish, [4] ... fought with each other and the Egyptian army withdrew before him. [5] He accomplished their defeat and to non-existence [beat?] them. As for the rest of the Egyptian army [6] which had escaped from the defeat (so quickly that) no weapon had reached them, in the district of Hamath [7] the Babylonian troops overtook and defeated them so that not a single man [escaped] to his own country. [8] At the time Nebuchadnezzar conquered the whole area of the Hatti-country. [9] For twenty-one years Nabopolassar had been king of Babylon. [10] On the **eighth of the month of Ab** [15 Aug. 605] he died (lit. 'the fates'); in the month of Elul Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon [11] and on the first day of the month of Elul he sat on the royal throne in Babylon.³²⁶

This is the official Babylonian account of the Battle of Carchemish. The Egyptians who were defeated at Carchemish had escaped to the city of Hamath. Pharaoh Necho and his allied forces left a contingent there to try to hold that city, while he was forced to retreat back to Egypt.

When Nebuchadnezzar arrived at Hamath he first surrounded the city. The Egyptians within the city were trapped. They fought a losing battle and were ultimately vanquished, as the above account says: "not a single man [escaped] to his own country."

Once again, the Bible confirms this history of Necho's defeat at Carchemish:

The word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the nations. Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated in the **fourth year of King Jehoiakim** son of Josiah of Judah (Jer 46:1-2).

What an amazing collaboration with true ancient history with the historical account of the Bible! It is interesting that Nebuchadnezzar, who was criticized by modern scholars as being weak and lacking leadership for his inactivity the year before, is now considered to be one of the greatest military minds of all the time. Once again, so much for modern scholarship's reconstruction of ancient history.

Now here is another important point to consider. The *Babylonian Chronicle* had originally translated that "Nebuchadnezzar conquered the whole area of the Hatti-country."³²⁷ Yet, according to a new restoration of the text proposed by A. K. Grayson,³²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar only conquered the "entire land of Ha[ma]th" rather than "the entire land of Hatti." And what is more important to

³²⁴ Donald J. Wiseman (*Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991], 17), notes: "Nebuchadnezzar might have been at Riblah when he heard of his father's death. There is no sure evidence that, at this time, the pursuit had reached the Egyptian border. Josephus' comment that 'the king of Babylon passed over the Euphrates and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, excepting Judea' may reflect a general survey of the effect of the Babylonian military presence in this and the following years."

³²⁵ B.M. 21946 *obv.* line 12 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 69).

³²⁶ B.M. 21946 *obv.* lines 1-11 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 67, 69) (emphasis mine).

³²⁷ B.M. 21946 *obv.* line 8 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 69).

³²⁸ A. K. Grayson, "Cronache dell'impero Neo-Babilonese," *Biblica & Oriente* 6 (1964): 205.

understand, there is no direct mention that Nebuchadnezzar entered Jerusalem. Indeed, once again we must quote Josephus in understanding this fact:

the king of Babylon passed over the Euphrates and took all Syria, as far as Pelusium, excepting Judea.³²⁹

As was noted above, for Nebuchadnezzar to pass over Syria, excepting Judah, would have been total military folly, unless, of course, he had already conquered it sometime before? And, as we have already shown, Nebuchadnezzar did that very thing the previous year according to the prophet Daniel.³³⁰

The historian Berossos, however, is not inconsistent with what is here proposed. His mentioning of captives of the Jews in the Battle of Carchemish represents a second deportation that was conducted by the adjutants of Nebuchadnezzar.

[134] ... Berosus subjoins what follows in his *History of Ancient Times*. I will set down Berosus's own accounts, which are these: [135] When Nabolassar, father of Nabuchodonosor, heard that the governor whom he had set over Egypt and over the parts of Coesyría [Coela-Syria] and Phoenicia, had revolted from him, he was not able to bear it any longer; but committing certain parts of his army to his son Nabuchodonosor, who was then but young, he sent him against the rebels: [136] Nabuchodonosor joined battle with him, and conquered him, and reduced the country under his dominion again. Now it so fell out, that his father Nabolassar fell into a distemper at this time, and died in the city of Babylon, after he had reigned twenty-one years. [137] But as he understood, in a little time, that his father Nabolassar was dead, he set the affairs of Egypt and the other countries in order, and committed the captives he had taken from the Jews, and Phoenicians, and Syrians, and of the nations belonging to Egypt, to some of his friends, that they might conduct that part of the forces that had on heavy armor, with the rest of his baggage, to Babylonia; while he went in haste, having but a few with him, *over the desert to Babylon*; [138] whither when he was come, he found the public affairs had been managed by the Chaldeans, and that the principal persons among them had preserved the kingdom for him. Accordingly he now entirely obtained all his father's dominions. He then came, and ordered the captives to be placed as colonies in the most proper places of Babylonia: [139] but for himself, he adorned the temple of Belus, and the other temples, after an elegant manner out of the spoils he had taken in the war.³³¹

Notice the little fact that when Nebuchadnezzar heard of his father's death he went "over the desert to Babylon." This is the very same dessert road that he took when he came to Jerusalem back in 606 BCE, confirmed by Daniel the Prophet. Thus, Berossos has also confirmed what the *Babylonian Chronicle* and the Bible have recorded, which appears to have been missed by modern historians.

It is now time to get back to the debate on how calendar years were counted in Judah at that time at the Last Days of Judah. Let us now look at the case for a Fall-to-Fall calendar in Judah.

Edwin R. Thiele's Case for a Tishri Calendar in Judah

How was the yearly calendar in ancient Judah reckoned? Was it on a Spring-to-Spring basis or was it on a Fall-to-Fall basis? The difference could mean a year off one way or the other.

Chronologist Edwin R. Thiele was a staunch proponent of the Tishri year reckoning system in Judah, so naturally, his reconstruction of events of the last days of Judah are different from what

³²⁹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10:6:1 [§86] (Whiston, 272).

³³⁰ Dan 1:1-3. Once again, the theory that the *Book of Daniel* was a Maccabean era fraud is monumental joke.

³³¹ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.*, 1:19 [§§133-39] (Whiston, 781). Cf. also *Ant.*, 10:11.1 [§221-24] (Whiston, 281-82).

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we have proposed up to this point. But in all fairness, we should at least review his reasoning as to why he felt compelled to adopt the system that he did. First of all, here is how he described the Battle of Carchemish:

A disastrous defeat was inflicted on the Egyptians. A remnant that fled to Hamath was wiped out with the result that “Nebuchadnezzar conquered the whole area of the Hatti-country.” This includes all of Syria and the territory south to the borders of Egypt. Babylon rather than Egypt was now the master of Palestine. This was the attack mentioned in Dan. 1:1, which took place in the third year of Jehoiakim, and in which Daniel and his companions were taken to Babylon. **It should be noticed that this is the third year of Jehoiakim according to Tishri reckoning, but the fourth year according to Nisan years** as mentioned in Jer. 46:2.³³²

Notice that Thiele seemingly solved the problem of the discrepancy of Daniel 1:1, which states that it is the third year of Jehoiakim that Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, whereas Jeremiah 46:2 says it is Jehoiakim’s fourth year. Thiele claimed that Daniel was using Tishri years, whereas Jeremiah (for some inexplicable reason) was counting by Nisan years. But Thiele has misunderstood the facts, as we have brought above. His “facts” do not agree with the comparison of the facts brought out in the *Babylonian Chronicle* above.

But more important is the fact that Thiele’s interpretation of the facts forces Jehoiakim’s accession year to be after Tishri 609 BCE. This inserts an entire extra year between the death of Josiah and the accession of Jehoiakim. Can this be done without affecting the chronology of Jeremiah? The answer should seem obvious. Here are the facts.

Reviewing the Chronology in the Last Days of Judah

Before continuing the record of the *Babylonian Chronicle*, we should pause to review the key elements of the chronological events. As seen in the above passage, the *Babylonian Chronicle* assigns the year of the Battle of Carchemish as the last year of Nabopolassar — his year 21, *i.e.*, 605 BCE; and that this same year equates to “the fourth year of King Jehoiakim,” according to Jeremiah 46:2.

We have already established the fact that when Josiah was slain in the Spring of 609 BCE, it was Josiah’s 31st year, while it was the 17th year of Nabopolassar. Both of these dates account for a four-year difference, so there is consistency within the internal data that we are dealing with. In other words, it is obvious that Jeremiah was indeed using a Nisan-Nisan year dating system in his calendar year reckoning (as even Thiele admits) because it matches exactly with that of the Babylonian calendar. But what is it that is missing here that we seemingly cannot put our finger on?

Did Regnal Years in Judah Begin with Nisan or Tishri?

All scholars are in agreement that the Babylonians (as well as the Assyrians and Persians) counted their years from Spring-to-Spring, *i.e.*, from Nisanu (March/April). They also are in agreement that regnal years were counted on the basis of full calendar years (not from the date of accession or the anniversary of that accession). But scholars are not in agreement as to whether in Judah the reigns of kings were counted from Spring or from Autumn.

³³² Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 165-66.

The importance of this inquiry is necessary to the overall determination of the solution. Indeed, the implication of this question is that all events could be off by either a half year earlier or a half year later, depending on when that event occurred in Judah and in Babylon.³³³ However, if years began in the Spring in Judah as well as in Babylon, then the problem basically goes away, since there would be total correspondence with both systems. This is why it seems to this author that the solution is staring us right in our eyes, with no real argument to the contrary.

The Fall-to-Fall Theory — A Closer Look

Since some scholars have interpreted the events surrounding the Battle of Carchemish differently (based upon a Fall-to-Fall calendar) used in Judah, we must try to first understand their reasoning before we can move forward. Here is the typical explanation:

... the Biblical Book of Daniel, if it is taken to be following the Judean (**autumn-autumn**) dating system, assigns to this year a siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar followed by the deportation to Babylon a number of young men of royal and noble birth, including Daniel himself (Dan 1:1-4).³³⁴

In other words (according to this reasoning), we can make the discrepancy of Jehoiakim's third year in Daniel 1:1 with Jehoiakim's fourth year of Jeremiah 36:1 to be reconciled simply by assuming that in Judah the calendar was reckoned on a Fall-to-Fall basis. By so doing the Babylonian calendar for Nebuchadnezzar's accession year would be seen as straddling both Jehoiakim's third and fourth years.

Abraham Malamat, who was one of the most vigorous proponents of the Judean Fall-to-Fall calendar hypothesis, shows in chart form what this would look like.³³⁵ He has Jehoiakim's third year begin with Tishri of 606 BCE and ends in Tishri of 605 BCE, while Nabopolassar's year 21, Nebuchadnezzar's accession year, ran from Nisan 605 BCE to Nisan 604 BCE. Since the Battle of Carchemish took place in the late Spring/early Summer of 605 BCE, this would be precisely in Jehoiakim's year three if we were counting years in Judah on a Tishri basis. And this would seem to vindicate the testimony of Daniel 1:1. But such a theory is false because it would again be in conflict with the specific testimony of Jeremiah:

The word of the LORD that came to the prophet Jeremiah concerning the nations. Concerning Egypt, about the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish and which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated in the **fourth year of King Jehoiakim** son of Josiah of Judah (Jer 46:1-2).

So, how did Abraham Malamat resolve this conundrum? According to his chronological chart,³³⁶ the year in which Jehoiakim ascended the throne would be from the Fall of 609 BCE to the Fall of 608 BCE, whereas he placed the year that Josiah died, and the three-month reign of Jehoahaz falling within the year before, from the Fall of 610 BCE to the Fall of 609 BCE.³³⁷ Thus, instead of all these events occurring during the same Biblical year, he has them occurring within two consecutive autumnal years.

³³³ The problem even gets more complicated when some scholars believe that Jeremiah used a Spring-to-Spring calendar, but then in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles* apparently he switched to employ a Fall-to-Fall calendar for some unknown reason.

³³⁴ T. C Mitchell, "The Reign of Josiah" in *Cambridge Ancient History*, 3:2:395.

³³⁵ Abraham Malamat, "The Twilight of Judah," in *History of Biblical Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 320.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*

³³⁷ Also, Edwin Thiele's chart (*Mysterious Numbers*, 162) exhibits the identical conclusion of Abraham Malamat.

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And what was Malamat's justification for such reasoning? He explained it in this way:

The three-month reign of Jehoahaz, till he was summoned to Pharaoh's headquarters at Riblah in Syria, lasted through Tammuz, Ab, and Elul. The enthronement of Jehoiakim by Necho came into effect evidently only in Tishri; this is all the more so if we are to allow for time-lapses between the death of Josiah and the irregular accession of Jehoahaz and, later, between the removal of Jehoahaz and the accession of Jehoiakim. This conclusion, *i.e.*, that Jehoiakim did not succeed to the throne before the start of Tishre 609 B.C., is essential to the chronological system applied by us ...³³⁸

Apparently Malamat was so taken by Edwin Thiele's nearly identical explanation that he adopted it as if it was his very own:

The end of Josiah's thirty-one years took place during Tammuz, 609 B.C., when Jehoahaz began his reign of three months. Since Josiah terminated his reign in 609, his accession took place in 641/40. The reign of Jehoahaz began in Tammuz, 609, and terminated in Tishri, three months later when Jehoiakim was placed on the throne by Necho. The accession year of Jehoiakim therefore began in Tishri, 609, and terminated the following year.³³⁹

This explanation may sound good on the surface, but the problem with placing Jehoiakim's accession after Tishri 1, based on a Fall-to-Fall calendar, is that it adds an entire extra year into the sequence of events. The very fact that an extra year is thereby introduced should have shut down the entire Fall-to-Fall calendar theory right then and there! We are thus forced to do what scholars should have done all along and go back and re-read what Jeremiah stated so very clearly:

The word that came to Jeremiah ... in the **fourth year of Jehoiakim** the son of Josiah ... From the **thirteenth year of Josiah**, even unto this day, these **three and twenty years**, the word of the LORD hath come unto me (Jer 25:2, 3, *emphasis the author's*).

Based on these facts, Jeremiah's "Call" to his prophetic ministry came in the 13th year of Josiah and continued until his 31st (inclusively reckoned) — *i.e.*, 19 years — and continued into the fourth year of Jehoiakim — a total of 23 years. This fact alone is totally devastating to the entire theory of a Fall-to-Fall calendar system in the last days of Judah. Why? Because if there is to be inserted an extra year here, it would make the count be 24 years.³⁴⁰ Thus, counting the years this way would lead us all the way down to the eleventh year of Zedekiah as being from the fall of 587 BCE to the Fall of 586 BCE, and therefore the siege of Jerusalem would have had to have occurred in the summer of 586 BCE. But this date conflicts with the testimony of Jeremiah, and therefore must be rejected on that basis alone.

Nevertheless, many Fall-to-Fall proponents still see this as no obstacle to their reasoning even though Abraham Malamat himself finally was forced to admit that this extra year is a serious problem for the Tishri dating system. Well, if it is indeed a serious problem with a Fall-to-Fall calendar system, then why is it still being supported?

...it definitely does not necessitate the synchronization (*sic!*) of Jehoiakim's fourth year with the 23rd year of Jeremiah's prophetic activity as a period of 23 years (from Josiah's 13th year to Jehoiakim's fourth year) would equate

³³⁸ Malamat, "Last Kings," 140-41.

³³⁹ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 165.

³⁴⁰ Again, referring back to Edwin Thiele's chart, he shows a Tishri year column which he says is the method used by the *Book of Kings* and *Daniel*, and a Nisan year column which he says was the method used by Jeremiah, thus the 23 years works out only in a Nisan year sequence.

Jehoiakim's fourth year with the 24th year of Jeremiah's prophecy — but then only according to a Tishri reckoning.³⁴¹

What an amazing admission! In other words, professor Abraham Malamat admits that if we count from Josiah's year 13 to Jehoiakim's year four, it only works out to be 23 years on a Nisan calendar, but 24 years on a Tishri calendar. No wonder Edwin Thiele came up with the two calendar solution (one in the Book of Kings and the other used by Jeremiah) in order to work around this glaring problem. But this is the kind of mischief that goes on with Tishri calendar advocates.

From the evidence thus far produced, it would appear that the case for a Fall-to-Fall calendar in Judah is disintegrating right before our very eyes — or should be! Nevertheless, refreshing observations like the following at least reassure us that not all scholars are face-saving apologists:

...an investigation of the chronological data relating to the years 609 = 587/6 B.C. with a view to determining whether a Nisan or a Tishri system of reckoning was in operation has shown that all the data, comprising material from 2 Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Babylonian Chronicle can best be harmonized on the supposition of the Nisan new year reckoning. Most of the arguments advanced in favor of an autumnal new year are inconclusive ... **the date of the battle of Carchemish given in Jer 46:2, which we know from the Babylonian Chronicle occurred before Ab 8, can be synchronized with Jehoiakim's fourth year only on a Nisan reckoning.**³⁴²

Once again, a sound deduction only prevails with a Nisan calendar for Judah at this time. Edwin Thiele's clever explanation that Jeremiah used Nisan years and the Book of Kings used Tishri years, of course, has finally seen its demise. We can now be certain that Nebuchadnezzar began the siege of Jerusalem in the 9th year of Zedekiah, on the 10th day of the 10th month according to both 2 Kings 25:1 and Jeremiah 52:4. This gives us full assurance that both Babylon and Judah used the same calendar system. And the sad thing is that Thiele himself recognized the problem — yes, believe it or not — but continually brushed it aside with the hope that no one would see this as a stumbling block to his entire thesis:

Items in Jeremiah that are taken from Kings, such as Jer. 39:1-10 and ch. 52 are in accord with Tishri reckoning as employed in Kings.³⁴³

Apparently, we are supposed to believe that Jeremiah was inconsistent with his own calendar usage, and used both Tishri years and Nisan years indiscriminately. Is anyone buying that?

Yet, another Tishri year proponent, Carl Olof Jonsson, also, promoted the idea that in Judah they counted regnal years on the basis of a Tishri yearly calendar:

³⁴¹ Malamat, "The Last Kings," 147. Malamat's reasoning is elsewhere just as unbelievably incoherent: "An argument in favor of the Tishri reckoning not raised in the current controversy can, incidentally, be inferred from the chronological superscription in Jeremiah 1:3, concerning the Fall of Jerusalem: 'until the end [*'ad-tom*] of the eleventh year of Zedekiah ... when Jerusalem was carried into exile in the fifth month' (author's translation). The juxtaposition of the fifth month (*i.e.*, Ab) with the approximate termination hereof the eleventh or, for that matter, any regnal year is feasible only on a Tishri basis (short of merely the sixth month before the actual year's end) and is discordant with a Nisan calendar (were the surplus would comprise almost half a year)" ("The Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah" in *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation* [Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987]: 304). Who can follow such convoluted reasoning? Indeed, if the fifth month is Ab, then the text is obviously counting months from Nisan. How can an argument be made that the text is referring to Tishri years when admittedly, one is already counting months from Nisan?

³⁴² D. J. A. Clines, "The Evidence for an Autumnal New Year in Pre-Exilic Israel Reconsidered," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 93:1 (March 1974): 37-38.

³⁴³ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 163.

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Jeremiah 1:3 states that the inhabitants of Jerusalem, after the desolation of the city, “went into exile in the *fifth* month,” which is also in agreement with the record in 2 Kings 25:8-12. Yet this fifth month is said to have been at “the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah.” Only if the regnal years were reckoned as beginning from Tishri (The seventh month) could the fifth month be said to be at “the end of” Zedekiah’s eleventh regnal year, which then ended with the next month, Elul, the sixth month.³⁴⁴

This explanation sounds good on the surface, but let us read again the context of Jeremiah:

The words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiyah, of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of King Josiah, son of Amon of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. It came also in the days of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, and until **the end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah** son of Josiah of Judah, until the captivity of Jerusalem (Jer 1:1-3).

Again, how can one make an argument that regnal years are counted from Tishri when the text itself clearly counts months from Nisan? Obviously, the “end of the eleventh year of King Zedekiah” was not merely talking about the calendar year ending in Adar, but as the text says “until the captivity of Jerusalem,” which is when Zedekiah’s reign came to an “end.”

Another objection to Nisan years offered by Jonsson is that in 2 Kings 22:3-10 we read of Josiah’s great reform in the 18th year of his reign. And then in 2 Kings 23:2-23 we read that Josiah kept the Passover also in his 18th year.

As the repairs of the temple, the cleansing of the land from idolatry and many other things recorded in 2 Kings 22:3 —23:23 could not reasonably have occurred within just two weeks, it seems obvious that Josiah’s eighteenth regnal year was not counted from Nisan 1, but from Tishri 1.³⁴⁵

The short amount of time to prepare for the Passover is not as strong an argument as it would appear. It wouldn’t reasonably take six months to accomplish all these particulars either. But Numbers 9:9-11 allows for the Passover to be taken in the second month if people were not able to take it in the first month. Therefore, one month and two weeks of cleansing the land is certainly reasonable, based on a second Passover observance.

Let us swing back on our journey in the *Babylonian Chronicle* and gather more evidence that will guide us to making a correct conclusion on this matter.

From Carchemish to Zedekiah

After the Battle of Carchemish in 605 BCE, the *Babylonian Chronicle* continues to give a year-by-year description of Nebuchadnezzar’s campaigns as far as the eleventh year of his reign. It is important that we continue to follow these critical events, carefully examining the chronology provided by this source, as continued support for the chronology advanced herein.

We know that the year after the Battle of Carchemish, *i.e.*, 604/03 BCE, was Nebuchadnezzar’s first full regnal year. This year equates to King Jehoiakim’s year five. And as the new Babylonian king, what was his first order of business? It was his duty to demand that all the kings of the western lands appear before him in Hatti in the month of Kislev (Nov./Dec).³⁴⁶

³⁴⁴ Jonsson, *Gentile Times*, 318.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁴⁶ B.M. 21946, *obv.* line 17 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 69).

We should realize that at this point in time Judah was no longer under the rulership of the Egyptians but was now a vassal of the Babylonians. It is at this point that Jehoiakim of Judah was made subservient to the King of Akkad and was forced to pay an annual tribute:

In his days (Jehoiakim) King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came up; Jehoiakim became his servant for three years; then he turned and rebelled against him (2 Kgs 24:1).

Thus, Jehoiakim became a servant of Nebuchadnezzar for the next three years. This means that for three years (603-601 BCE) Jehoiakim was forced to dutifully pay the annual tribute to Nebuchadnezzar.

In Nebuchadnezzar's second year (603/602 BCE) the *Babylonian Chronicle* reports Nebuchadnezzar back in the "Hatti country" besieging another major city (the name of which is broken off).³⁴⁷

In Nebuchadnezzar's third year (602/601 BCE), Jehoiakim's year seven, he again is in the "Hatti land" and "brought (back) much [spoil] from the Hatti-land into Akkad."³⁴⁸

Then in year four of Nebuchadnezzar (601/600 BCE), in the month of Kislev (Nov/Dec), he took the bold move of attacking Egypt itself.

[5] In the fourth year the king of Akkad mustered his army ... [6] In the month of Kislev he took the lead of his army and marched to Egypt. The king of Egypt heard (it) and mustered his army. [7] In open battle they smote the breast (of) each other and inflicted great havoc on each other. The king of Akkad and his troops turned back and returned to Babylon.³⁴⁹

The battle was a virtual defeat for both the Babylonians and Egyptians, wherein each side inflicted great casualties on each other. No tribute was carried back to Babylon. This is significant, for it reveals that Jehoiakim and the people of the Palestinian plain must have seen this as a virtual defeat of the Babylonians and therefore took this opportunity to make a bold stand of independence and decided to hold back their annual tribute to Nebuchadnezzar.

Indeed, the defeat of the Babylonians was ample reason for Jehoiakim to rebel after he had been the servant of Nebuchadnezzar for three years.³⁵⁰ Neither the Babylonians nor the Egyptians, were in any position to do something about this at this time, which, obviously, Jehoiakim was certainly going to take advantage of.

The late and noted scholar David N. Freedman, editor of the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* (who I had the privilege to meet and discuss with several times) also made note of this point:

The Babylonian army suffered such serious losses that Nebuchadnezzar returned home immediately, and spent the whole of the following year in reorganizing his military forces. Not until Dec., 599, did he set forth to the west again. The Egyptians must have suffered badly also, because they made no overt move to establish themselves in Syria-Palestine. While the great powers were licking their wounds, Jehoiakim and Judah enjoyed freedom briefly. Nebuchadnezzar, however, countered the rebellion by enlisting the help of Judah's neighbors. These

³⁴⁷ B.M. 21946, *obv.* lines 21-23 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 71). Redford (*Ancient Times*, 456) observes: "If, as seems most likely, the fragmentary lines of the *Chronicle* are here to be restored with a reference to 'Gaza,' Nebuchadnezzar's strategy is chillingly clear: he was intent upon wholly neutralizing and reducing the Philistine plain and the coastal highway to Egypt by utter destruction and depopulation. Gaza fell we may be sure, and shortly an exiled community of Gazaeans turns up in Babylonia. Philistia was barren, its kings and population in exile: the road lay open to Egypt."

³⁴⁸ B.M. 21946, *rev.* lines 1-4 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 71).

³⁴⁹ B.M. 21946, *rev.* lines 5-7 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 71).

³⁵⁰ 2 Kgs 24:1; Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6.2 [§88] (Whiston, 272).

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measures proved insufficient, so Nebuchadnezzar led the main Babylonian force against Judah in Dec., 598.³⁵¹

Freedman and Redford color in the event as follows:

Despite the seeming success of Necho's defensive action and his recapture of Gaza—in the next year we find Nebuchadnezzar forced to recoup his losses by staying at home and refraining from military activity—Necho had given up on intervention in hither Asia. For the next six years Egypt is conspicuous by its absence from the chronicle, and Nebuchadnezzar was for the most part occupied elsewhere than in the west.³⁵²

Nebuchadnezzar was helpless due to the fact that his wounded army was so battered that the *Babylonian Chronicle* tells us that in his fifth year (600/599 BCE) he could not go out in the field for that entire year, but had to remain home where he spent the year rebuilding new chariots and gathering horses in great numbers.

Jehoiakim held out for the remainder of Nebuchadnezzar's sixth year. There was no tribute paid to the Babylonians by the king of Judah, nor, most likely, by any other vassal state in the West. This defiance could only be tolerated for so long and it eventually had to be dealt with by the Babylonians.

In Nebuchadnezzar's sixth year (599/598 BCE) he returned to Hatti-land, this time into the desert regions, plundering the Arab Bedouins.³⁵³ At the same time the *Babylonian Chronicle* reports that the king of Akkad "from Hatti-land he sent out his companies."³⁵⁴ What does it mean, "he sent out his companies?" Here again, it is the Bible that explains what was going on.

And the Lord sent against him [Jehoiakim] bands [or companies] of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Arameans, and bands of the Moabites; and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it (2 Kgs 24:2).³⁵⁵

What a magnificent collaboration of the *Babylonian Chronicle* and the Scriptural tradition! This is an extremely vital point to the story that we need to remember concerning the first invasion of Jerusalem subsequently.

We have now arrived at the crucial seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar (598/597 BCE). From the *Babylonian Chronicle*, it would appear that Nebuchadnezzar conducted a three-month campaign against Jerusalem from Kislimu (December, 598 BCE) to Addaru (March, 597 BCE). Jerusalem finally capitulated on Addaru 2 (16 March 597 BCE), right at the end of Nebuchadnezzar's year seven.

In the **seventh year**, the **month of Kislev**, the king of Akkad mustered his troops, marched to the Hatti-land, and encamped against (i.e. besieged) the city of Judah and on the **second day of the month of Adar** he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice (lit. heart), received its heavy tribute and sent (them) to Babylon.³⁵⁶

Here is an account that for the first time precisely gives us exacting chronological information about the first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. There is no doubt that "the city of Judah" mentioned here in this context was the capital city of Jerusalem. The captured king can be

³⁵¹ Freedman, "Babylonian Chronicle," 54.

³⁵² Freedman and Redford, "Dates in Ezekiel," 475.

³⁵³ Jer 48:28, 32: "Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated. ... Their camels shall become booty, their herds of cattle a spoil."

³⁵⁴ B.M. 21946, rev. 9 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 71).

³⁵⁵ See also on this Freedman, "Babylonian Chronicle," 54.

³⁵⁶ B.M. 21946, rev. lines 11-13 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 73).

none other than the 18-year-old king Jehoiachin. And the precise date of his capture is here recorded as being the “second day of the month of Addaru,” *i.e.*, 16 March 597 BCE.³⁵⁷

All modern scholars are unanimous in accepting this date for the first fall of Jerusalem. So, why is there confusion about the year of the destruction of Jerusalem as being either being 587 BCE or 586 BCE? It is here that we must carefully follow the events succeeding.

The Fate of Jehoiakim

The Bible is quite clear that when Nebuchadnezzar stormed Jerusalem, he first took Jehoiachin captive (2 Kgs 24:8-16). But, whatever happened to King Jehoiachin’s father, King Jehoiakim? The Bible tells us that Jehoiakim’s son, Jehoiachin, had only been on the throne for a period of three months (2 Kgs 24:8). That is the same amount of time that the Babylonians conducted their siege.

Indeed, if we walk back three months from March of 597 BCE, that puts us squarely in the month of December of 598 BCE, precisely the very time when Nebuchadnezzar was mustering his troops back in Babylon and set off for Jerusalem. Obviously, if Jehoiakim died at the beginning of Jehoiachin’s reign, then Nebuchadnezzar could not have been on the scene when that happened. Yet, the Bible tells us that

Against him [Jehoiakim] came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him back to Babylon (2 Chron 26:6).

If Nebuchadnezzar did in fact put Jehoiakim in shackles, was it then when he arrived in March of 597 BCE? And if that were the case, then are we not witnessing some sort of co-regency here with Jehoiakim’s son Jehoiachin during that three-month period? Or, more likely, did the *Am ha-aretz* (the “people of the land” party) depose Jehoiakim and put his son Jehoiachin on the throne in order to appease the Babylonians? Furthermore, when Jehoiachin assumed his reign in December of 598 BCE, was his father still alive, but deposed by the *Am ha-aretz*?

The inglorious death of the hapless King Jehoiakim had been prophesied by the Prophet Jeremiah:

Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah: They shall not lament for him, saying “Alas, my brother!” or “Alas, sister!” They shall not lament for him, saying “Alas, lord!” or “Alas, his majesty!” With the burial of a donkey he shall be buried—dragged off and thrown out beyond the gates of Jerusalem (Jer 22:18-19).

Jeremiah further recorded:

Therefore thus says the Lord concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah. He shall have no one to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night. And I will punish him and his offspring and his servants for their iniquity; I will bring on them, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and on the people of Judah, all the disasters with which I have threatened them— but they would not listen” (Jer 36:30-31).

Notice that during the daytime there was heat during the day and at nighttime there was frost. This alone indicates the seasonal time period of late Winter/early Spring.

These prophecies clearly state that Jehoiakim’s body would be thrown out of the gates of Jerusalem. Josephus informs us that when Nebuchadnezzar finally did arrive in person, Jehoiakim, cer-

³⁵⁷ Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 27. This date is agreed upon by all scholars and this author.

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tainly out of foreboding fear, opened the gates of Jerusalem. And if Nebuchadnezzar bound him in chains to take him back to Babylon, according to Josephus, he nonetheless had a change of mind:

3. (96) ... the king of Babylon made an expedition against Jehoiakim, whom he received [into the city], and this out of fear of the foregoing predictions of the prophet [Jeremiah] ... (97) yet when he [Nebuchadnezzar] was come into the city, he did not observe the covenants he had made; but he slew ... their king Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial; and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country and of the city.³⁵⁸

The Bible and Josephus clearly state that Nebuchadnezzar was there in Jerusalem at the time of Jehoiakim's demise. He at first shackled Jehoiakim in order to take him back to Babylon, but then, apparently for some reason (Jeremiah's prophecy), changed his mind and made a ghastly example out of the hapless king of Judah.³⁵⁹ However, from the account in the *Book of Kings*, one would never have suspected any of this. It simply says:

So Jehoiakim slept with his ancestors, then his son Jehoiachin succeeded him (2 Kgs 24:6).

From such an account, it would appear that his body was obviously recovered and buried in the royal tombs. The account in the *Book of Second Kings* helps clear up some of the confusion:

Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign; he reigned three months in Jerusalem. ... At that time the **servants of king Nebuchadnezzar** of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came to the city, **while his servants were besieging it**. King Jehoiachin of Judah gave himself up to the king of Babylon, himself, his mother, his servants, his officers, and his palace officials. The king of Babylon took him prisoner in the **eighth year of his (Nebuchadnezzar's) reign**. He carried off all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, he cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the LORD, which King Solomon of Israel had made, all this as the LORD had foretold. He carried away all Jerusalem, all the officials, all the warriors, ten thousand captives, all the artisans and the smiths; no one remained, except the poorest people of the land. He carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; the king's mother, the king's wives, his officials, and the elite of the land, he took into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon (2 Kgs 24:8-16, emphasis the author's).

Notice that the beginning of the siege was conducted by "the servants of king Nebuchadnezzar" — not Nebuchadnezzar himself. Then it says that Nebuchadnezzar arrived "*while* his servants were besieging it." Jehoiachin surrendered himself and his family when Nebuchadnezzar arrived, but nothing is said about Jehoiakim.

On this point Alberto R. Green offers a convincing explanation:

If ... [the Babylonian] army left Babylon towards the beginning of the 9th month and there was only a three-month reign for Jehoiachin reckoned inclusively, then Jehoiakim did not die until sometime towards the end of the 10th month, and the possibility exists that Jehoiakim still occupied the throne of Judah when the Babylonian army took up their positions around the city. ...it seems plausible to theorize that when the siege of the city began, there was deep concern among the residents of Jerusalem in general and among the pro-Babylonian faction in particular. This concern and fear precipitated blame upon Jehoiakim for the political problems which were moving the city toward destruction, and it could legitimately have been felt that if Jehoiakim had remained a loyal vassal to Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian army would not then be investing the city. As this

³⁵⁸ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6.3 [§96-7] (Whiston, 272).

³⁵⁹ Did Nebuchadnezzar wish to become a self-fulfilling prophecy?

sort of sentiment deepened and spread among the residents of the city, the next step could easily have been an attempt to remedy the situation by eliminating the cause of it, namely, Jehoiakim himself. Under such circumstances, if the king was still alive when the Babylonians arrived, he could have died in the ensuing coup at the hand of the pro-Babylonian faction in the city as that faction attempted to save Jerusalem from destruction. His body could, in that case, have been thrown out as a sop to appease Nebuchadnezzar and to induce the Babylonian king to change his mind about conquering the city.³⁶⁰

Of course, Green's explanation does not address the fact that Nebuchadnezzar shackled Jehoiakim. Green's hypothesis is attractive, but a better explanation would be that it is more likely that the initial siege of Jerusalem was conducted by Nebuchadnezzar's servants in December of 598 BCE, just as the *Babylonian Chronicle* and the Bible tell us that it did. This is when Jehoiakim was captured and was shackled to take him back to Babylon, along with the prophet Ezekiel and other captives. It is only when Nebuchadnezzar arrived in March of 597 BCE that Nebuchadnezzar decided that he would kill Jehoiakim, take Jehoiachin captive, and install Zedekiah as the Babylonian appointed puppet king of Judah.

Nebuchadnezzar may have at first decided to take Jehoiakim prisoner, but then at the last minute decided that it might be better to slaughter him as an example for the Judahites to give up the siege. Nebuchadnezzar, we must therefore conclude, then threw Jehoiakim's lifeless body against the walls of Jerusalem, just as Jeremiah had predicted.

Jehoiachin then must have realized that further resistance against the Babylonians was futile and he was thus forced to capitulate. Such a move on Jehoiachin's part may explain why he and his family were subsequently given exceptional clemency in Babylon for years to come.

One other point; Jewish tradition preserves the idea that the Babylonian captivity began on Kislev 3.³⁶¹ Such a date dovetails exactly when Jehoiakim was deposed and Jehoiachin came to the throne. If we accept such a tradition, then this date would be equivalent to Sunday, November 19, 598 (JD 1503 326) BCE. Therefore, it is this traditional Jewish date for when that Babylonian Captivity began which is also an important clue in order to resolve the chronology of this time.

How Long was Jehoiachin's Reign?

Jehoiakim died in December of 598 BCE and was succeeded by his son, the 18-year-old Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24:6, 8). The account given in *Second Kings* for the length of reign of Jehoiachin merely says that it was for three months. However, the parallel account in 2 Chronicles gives contrary data:

Jehoiachin was **eight years old** when he began to reign, he **reigned three months and ten days**. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord (2 Chr 36:9).

Obviously, something appears wrong with the Masoretic Text. John M. Berridge notes:

Jehoiachin became king of Judah at the age of 18 (2 Kgs 24:8; the Hebrew text of 2 Chr 36:9 incorrectly states that he was 8 years of age [the LXX reads "eighteen"]), ...³⁶²

Although most commentators focus in on the fact that the age of Jehoiachin may be a scribal error,³⁶³ there is little discussion of the "ten days" added to Jehoiachin's three-month reign.

³⁶⁰ Alberto R. Green, "The Fate of Jehoiakim," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 20:2 (Summer 1982): 107-8.

³⁶¹ Jacques J. Lyons and Abraham de Sola, *Jewish Calendar for Fifty Years*. ... (Cincinnati and Chicago: Block Publishing, 1854), 29. It was on this traditional date that it appears Ezekiel was deported.

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Indeed, where else has there ever been given the exact length of reign to the very day? The point might be considered mute with a system that counts regnal years as full calendar years, but the discussion spills over as to the age of Jehoiachin at his capture.

As far as the discrepancy of whether Jehoiachin was 8 years old versus 18, Berridge believes that the discrepancy can be explained by a pre-ordination ten years before his actual accession to the throne. Such a view is not new and was earlier espoused by E. W. Bullinger:

Some codices, with Sept. and Syr., read “eight”, but 2 Kings 24:8 reads “eighteen”. The “eighteen” must include his co-regency, the “eight” to his reigning alone. This practice was common in Israel and Judah as well as in ancient contemporary kingdoms.³⁶⁴

Apparently, since Jehoiachin’s mother accompanied Jehoiachin to Babylon, it would seem that he was an underage child who was still under his mother’s care. However, there is nothing here to rule out that an 18-year boy is also still reason for his mother to be included in the exile.³⁶⁵

Okay, here are the facts. 1) That Jehoiachin could have been an eight-year-old boy at his accession must be rejected for the following reasons. Kings 24:15 states that Jehoiachin had “wives.” 2) Furthermore, a “ration” tablet has been found, dated to the year of 593 BCE which mentions the fact that Jehoiachin had five sons at that time.³⁶⁶ Obviously, Jehoiachin did not have “wives” and five sons by the age of 8. Thus, Jehoiachin was at least 18 years old when he began to reign — the age eight theory must now be put aside once and for all.

As to the “10-day” discrepancy in the *Book of Chronicles* account, again it suspiciously looks like a transposition of numbers by a scribe. Yet, those who uncritically take the three-month and 10 day figure at face value are eager to further tell us that they can even presume to pin-point the exact date for the demise of King Jehoiakim, viz. December 6/7, 598 BCE.³⁶⁷ This is derived simply by taking the known date for the Fall of Jerusalem, i.e., 16 March 597 BCE,³⁶⁸ and counting backward for a period of three months and 10 days. But all of this sort of reasoning is beginning to sound a little too suspicious and for good cause.

First of all, we need to step back and look at these two accounts critically. There seems to be one common denominator between the age and the number of days, and that is the word “ten.” Doesn’t it even seem just a little suspect that there just so happened to be a “ten” year difference

³⁶² John M. Berridge, “Jehoiachin” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 3:661. Strictly speaking, Codex Vaticanus reads “eight years old,” whereas the Alexandrinus text reads “eighteen years old” (*The Septuagint with Apocrypha*, ed. Lancelot Brenton [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995]), 616. Since Josephus also included the ten extra days in his account, as well as the Septuagint versions, then it looks like that we are faced with a very old tradition that was even extant before these sources were created (Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6.3 [§98], Whiston, 272).

³⁶³ But of course, Floyd Nolen Jones (*Chronology*, 192-94), a strict Scriptural inerrant, would obviously object to any “scribal error” explanation, not realizing that the error has been “divinely” corrected by Josephus.

³⁶⁴ Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, 614.

³⁶⁵ Redford contradicts himself when he says that the heir of Jehoiakim “was his eight-year-old son” (*Ancient Times*, 459), but his footnote then states that: “In light of the event, Chronicles is here to be preferred over the record of 2 Kings 24:8, which makes Jehoiachin eighteen at his accession” (fn. 141).

³⁶⁶ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 308.

³⁶⁷ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 459. The supposed Babylonian date of Marheshvan 22 is based on the assumption that “Jehoiakim’s death took place three months and ten days before the city’s fall” (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 33). Jewish tradition, as noted above, would place the exile 10 days later on Kislev 3, a date yielding November 19, 598 BCE (JD 1503 326).

³⁶⁸ Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 27.

between the ages of Jehoiachin, and a “ten” **day** difference in the length of his reign, between these two accounts? The word “ten” seems inordinately misplaced in the *Chronicles* version.

Alberto R. Green settles the matter:

... two scribal errors are related and probably developed through an inadvertent transposition of the word “ten” from the first to the second of the two chronological phrases in this verse. ... The word “ten” was transposed to its new location following “months,” and the word “days” was then added to explain its presence there.³⁶⁹

Green’s explanation here is solid. The *Masoretic Text* for 2 Chronicles 36:9 must be found as a scribal error and 2 Kings 24:8 corrects that error. Once we understand this discrepancy, then we are on firm ground that Jehoiachin began his reign at age 18, and reigned in round numbers three months — not some foolish notion “for three months *and* ten days.” What a big deal out of nothing! Now that this foolish issue has been finally resolved, let us press on with the real issues.

Another Problem with Jehoiachin’s Reign

Whether one believes that the length of Jehoiachin’s reign was three months or three months and ten days, or that it began on Kislev 3 or not, there seems to be another problem that few scholars have addressed. Realize that one month from Kislev is Tebeth; one month from Tebeth is Shebat; and; one month from Shebat is Adar. And Jerusalem fell for the first time on Addaru 2 (16 March 597), almost exactly three months from Kislimu 3 to Addaru 2, using the Babylonian calendar.³⁷⁰ But for the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar used in this study it appears that there were actually two Adars that year, which would mean an interval of four months before we get to 2 Adar II, *viz.*, March 15, 597 (JD 1503 443).³⁷¹

This problem is further compounded when we realize that according to the reconstructed Babylonian calendar of Parker and Dubberstein, the Babylonians had inserted a second month of Ululu (Elul) that same year, which was in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar. So, in reality, when the *Babylonian Chronicle* says that “in the seventh year, the month of Kislev,” normally Kislev (Kislimu) is the ninth month, but in that particular year it was the tenth month. Then when it says, “the second day of Adar,” this is not the twelfth month, but the thirteenth month. If this all seems confusing, it is. So, hang onto your seats, there’s more.

Now both the Babylonian and the Hebrew year started at the same time. The reconstructed Babylonian year began on Nisanu 1 (March 27, 598 BCE, JD 1503 089) and the reconstructed Hebrew year began on Nisan 1 (March 25, 598 BCE, JD 1503 087). Thus, the tenth month of the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar would have been Tebeth, not Kislev. Therefore, the thirteenth month on the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar would have been Adar II.

However, the question that remains is this: what does it mean that Zedekiah was installed “at the turn of the year” (2 Chr 36:10)? Does it mean Nisan 1? Or could the term have meant the ver-

³⁶⁹ Green, “The Fate of Jehoiakim,” 105. It is interesting that Josephus also records that Jehoiachin reigned three months and ten days (*Ant.*, 10.6.3 [§98], Whiston, 272), indicating a curious agreement with the *Masoretic Text* of the Second Chronicles version. Obviously, this discrepancy was in existence when Josephus copied the text. Such a curious fact needs to be further investigated by scholars. Indeed, has anyone ever noticed this remarkable attestation to the first-century corroboration of the *Masoretic Text* with Josephus?

³⁷⁰ BM 21946.

³⁷¹ The Babylonian date is accepted in this study.

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nal equinox, which was before Nisan 1, but would be closer to the time of Addaru 2 (Mar. 16, 597)? The difference could mean an entire year in Zedekiah's reign based on a Nisan-Nisan year. Scholars never seem to address this problem. But the final nail in the coffin against 586 BCE being the year of the destruction of Jerusalem is understanding the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity.

Jehoiachin's Thirty-Seventh Year

The book of *Second Kings* closes with this interesting footnote:

In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of king Jehoiachin of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released King Jehoiachin of Judah from prison; he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the other seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes. Every day of his life he dined regularly in the king's presence. For his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion every day as long as he lived (2 Kgs 25:27-30).³⁷²

Do note the phrase "in the year that he (Amel-marduk) began to reign." Also, a further clue is given in that a portion was given to Jehoiachin "as long as he lived." It certainly would not make sense to use a phrase like that if Jehoiachin was released near the end of the reign of Amel-marduk. Yet, one scholar, who may entertain the major opinion of most scholars, John M. Berridge, states the following:

Amel-Marduk may have intended to restore Jehoiachin or one of his sons to the throne as a vassal king; however, **Amel-Marduk died in 560 B.C.E, shortly after Jehoiachin's release.**³⁷³

Despite this opinion, we should realize that the argument for identifying the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity has long ago been a key component for identifying the year 587 BCE as the year of the destruction of Jerusalem, even by the brilliant chronologist Henry Fynes Clinton back in 1851:

The 37th year of Jehoiakin's captivity in the 25th day of the 12th month fell within the 1st year of Evil-Merodach. This 25th day of the 12th month was in reference to the months of the Hebrew year, and marked the month of February. But as the 1st of Evil-Merodach was dated from Jan. 11 B. C. 561, this would be February 561. And as Zedekiah began to reign about June, the captivity of Jehoiakin necessarily commenced in June, and consequently his 37th year in June 562, since it was still current in February following. But if his 37th year commenced in June 562, his captivity is fixed to June B. C. 598; the 11th year of Zedekiah was completed in June 587, and the month Ab in which the temple was destroyed, was in July 587: which refutes the date of Usher, B. C. 588, for the burning of the temple, because, if this event had occurred in that year, the 37th of Jehoiakin's captivity would have commenced in June 563, and the 12th month and 25th day would have fallen in February 562, before the accession of Evil-Merodach. Again, it refutes the date of Jackson and Hales, B. C. 586, because in that case the 37th year would have commenced in June 561, and February of that 37th year would have fallen in 560, which would rather belong to the second year of Evil-Merodach.³⁷⁴

Henry F. Clinton's lucid analysis was exactly right a century before the modern discovery of Babylonian texts. He provided the very key to resolving the entire argument about the 37th year of Jehoiachin. And that key is in the understanding of the dynamics of the reign of Amel-marduk.³⁷⁵

³⁷² This is repeated in Jeremiah 52:31-34 in nearly identical language.

³⁷³ Berridge, "Jehoiachin," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 2:713, 3:663.

³⁷⁴ Clinton, *Epitome*, 127-28.

Carl Olaf Jonsson, unfortunately, believes that Jeremiah reckoned Jehoiachin's 37 years based on a Tishri (Autumn) calendar, which he explains in the following quotation:

In 2 Kings 25:27 (= Jeremiah 52:31), Jehoiachin's 37th year is equated with the accession year of Evil-Merodach. Here we have an excellent confirmation of the conclusion that the Judean kings applied a Tishri-to-Tishri regnal year.³⁷⁶

This is circular reasoning because Jonsson is a 586 BCE advocate, as well as a Tishri calendar advocate. So, in reality, Jonsson is merely recycling his own assumptions back into the argument in order to make it come the way that he explained it. This is why we should always be cautious about such kind of reasoning. Yeah, verily, it all sounds so good on the surface to the unsuspecting student, but these are the kind of details that we must thoroughly review in the light of new evidence before we can draw a solid conclusion.

Continuing with Jonsson's comments:

Evil-Merodach ascended to the throne in the autumn of 562 B.C.E., and his accession-year ran to Nisan, 561 B.C.E. Jehoiachin's release from prison took place in the twelfth month of Evil-Merodach's accession year (Jeremiah 52:31), on the twenty-fourth day (*sic!*, 25th or 27th). This corresponded to March 30, [*sic!* April 3] 561 B.C.E. (Julian calendar).³⁷⁷

Such reasoning again is flawed. Why? Consider that if "Evil-Merodach" came to power in the "autumn of 562 B.C.E.," then why would he have waited another full lunar year (355 days) before releasing Jehoiachin when he could have done it all along as soon as he became king? The text specifies that Jehoiachin was released when Amel-marduk "began his reign." Indeed, Josephus stated:

But now, after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-Merodach his son succeeded in the kingdom, who IMMEDIATELY set Jeconiah at liberty, and esteemed him among his most intimate friends.³⁷⁸

Again, Jonsson reasons:

If Nisan-to-Nisan regnal years are applied to Jehoiachin's exile, his 37th year cannot be counted from Nisan, 561 B.C.E., as this month fell after his release from prison. But if his 37th year of exile is reckoned from Nisan, 562 B.C.E., in order to retain the synchronism to Evil-Merodach's accession year, his first year of exile has to be reckoned from Nisan, 598, to Nisan 597 B.C.E. Is this likely?

As his deportation took place around Nisan 1, 597 B.C.E (2 Kings 24:10-17; 2 Chronicles 36:10, and the Babylonian Chronicle B.M. 21946:11-13), this would mean that his first year of exile fell nearly exactly one year before he was deported! As this is impossible, his years of exile must have been reckoned according to Tishri-to-Tishri years.³⁷⁹

No, no, no! Jonsson here does not place the 37th year correctly. To start the count from Tishri 598 BCE to Tishri 597 BCE would place Jehoiachin's release in his 36th year — not his 37th. Or, if we count year one of Jehoiachin's captivity from Tishri 599 BCE to 598 BCE, that would place his year one a whole year before his captivity — which is impossible. The beauty of the synchronism

³⁷⁵ The problem that Clinton did not address was whether Jeremiah was counting years on a Hebrew Spring calendar or a Hebrew Autumn calendar.

³⁷⁶ Jonsson, *Gentile Times*, 348.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.11.2 [§229] (Whiston, 282).

³⁷⁹ Jonsson, *Gentile Times*, 348.

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with Amel-marduk's accession being on the exact day of Jehoiachin's release is the vital key to a correct understanding of the subject.

Jack Finegan offered another solution to the problem:

The Hebrew in the two passages [2 Kgs 25:27] בִּשְׁנַת קָלְכּוֹ אֶת־יָאָחָז (bishnat malko 'et-rosh) is not the same, however, as what we have recognized as the normal designation of an accession year (§421). Rather the present phrase is more probably to be translated as James Moffatt does, "in the first year of his reign," and the first year, following the accession year, was 561/560.³⁸⁰

Nice try, but once again this solution would make Jehoiachin's release a full year after Amel-marduk's accession, which should be seen as an issue that goes against the known facts. So, let us go over these known facts.

According to Parker and Dubberstein, the last dated text of Nebuchadnezzar was VI/26/43. This was Ululu 26, year 43.³⁸¹ This would answer to a Julian date of Oct. 8, 562 BCE (JD 1516 433). Then the first dated text of Nebuchadnezzar's son, Amel-marduk, is dated to exactly that very same day, viz., VI/26/acc.³⁸² This certainly leads us to the conclusion that the death of Nebuchadnezzar occurred on Oct. 8, 562 BCE, and his son, Amel-marduk, ascended to the throne on the very day of his father's death.³⁸³

Note that the date on the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar used in this study is also on 12/27/37 = Oct 8, 562 BCE (JD 1516 433).³⁸⁴ This is a three-way tie for the exact day of Nebuchadnezzar's last official date, Amel-marduk's first official correspondence, and Jehoiachin's release.³⁸⁵

A Babylonian/Hebrew Comparison of Amel-marduk's Dates with Jehoiachin's Captivity

Table 10:

| Day of A-m Reign | Babylonian Events | Jehoiachin's Exile Fall Heb. Calendar | Jehoiachin's Exile Spring Heb. Calendar | Julian Date | Julian Day | Event |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|-------------|------------|--|
| 0 | Ilulu 26 year 43 of Nebuchad. | Elul 27 year 36 of Jehoiachin | Elul 27 37 yr of Jehoiachin | Oct. 8, 562 | 1516 433 | Last known text of Nebuchad. year 43. ^a |

³⁸⁰ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 264. This idea was also proposed by Freedy and Redford, "Dates in Ezekiel," 467, table 1.

³⁸¹ Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 12.

³⁸² *Ibid.*

³⁸³ See however Jonsson, *Gentile Times*, 323, who discusses a possible one month overlap in the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Amel-marduk based on evidence found later than Wiseman's publication.

³⁸⁴ 2 Kgs 25:27. The same text is found in Jer 52:31, except there the date is the 25th day of the twelfth month.

³⁸⁵ Admittedly, the evaluation that Gershon Galil (*Chronology*, 117, n. 39) adds to the discussion needs more study and review, which would be too lengthy to go into at this point, and also does not alter the overall chronological scheme thus far established.

Table 10:

| Day of A-m Reign | Babylonian Events | Jehoiachin's Exile Fall Heb. Calendar | Jehoiachin's Exile Spring Heb. Calendar | Julian Date | Julian Day | Event |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|------------|--|
| 0 | Ilulu 26 acc. yr of Amel-marduk | Elul 27 year 36 of Jehoiachin | Elul 27 year 37 of Jehoiachin | Oct. 8, 562 | 1516 433 | First known text of Amel-marduk in his acc. year (same date). ^b |
| 0 | Ilulu 26 acc. yr of Amel-marduk | _____ | Elul 27 562 | Oct. 8, 562 | 1516 433 | Jehoiachin released in yr 37 per Spring Cal. |
| 180 | Addaru 30 562 | Adar 29 year 37 of Jehoiachin | Adar 29 year 37 of Jehoiachin | Apr. 5, 561 | 1516 613 | Last day of Amel-marduk's accession year. |
| 181 | Nisanu 1 561 | Nisan 1 yr 37 of Jehoiachin | Nisan 1 yr 38 of Jehoiachin | Apr. 6, 561 | 1516 614 | First day of Amel-marduk's year one. |
| 355 | Ilulu 27 561 | Elul 27 37 of Jehoiachin | _____ | Sept. 27 561 | 1516 788 | Jehoiachin released in yr 37 per Fall cal. |
| 532 | Nisanu 1 560 | Adar I, 26 560 | Adar I, 26 560 | Mar. 26, 560 | 1516 965 | First day of Amel-marduk's year two |
| 699 | Duzu 17 560 | Tammuz 16/38 | Tammuz 16/38 | Aug. 7, 560 | 1517 101 | Last known text of Amel-marduk |

a. Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 12.

b. *Ibid.*

It would appear that as soon as Amel-marduk took the throne of Babylon, one of the first things that he did was to not only release Jehoiachin from prison, but he elevated him to a status whereby he could dine with the king. This was probably the main reason Neriglissar, his sister's husband, was so infuriated at him. Neriglissar said, according to Berossos, that Amel-marduk

... 'managed the affairs in a lawless and outrageous fashion.', and for this he was assassinated.³⁸⁶

³⁸⁶ Donald J. Wiseman, "Babylonia 605-539 B.C.," in *The Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 3:2, 240.

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This text goes on to say that Neriglissar plotted and killed Amel-marduk in the second year of his reign. It thus must be imagined that Jehoiachin probably received a similar end. However, why wouldn't the Bible tell us about Jehoiachin's fate if that were the case, only two years away?

As for why Jeremiah counted the years here on a Tishri-Tishri basis here should not deter us from what has already been established. Jeremiah used both reckonings for whatever reason.³⁸⁷

The Chronology of the Capture of Jerusalem

Jerusalem was initially captured on Addaru 2, March 16, 597 BCE,³⁸⁸ as we have carefully determined. The parallel accounts are given in 2 Kings 24:6-16 and 2 Chronicles 36:9-10. Of special notice is verse 10 of 2 Chronicles 36:

In the **Spring** of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him [Jehoiachin] to Babylon, along with the precious vessels of the house of the LORD, and made his brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem (2 Chron 36:10).

Notice that the *New Revised Standard Version*, quoted above, translated this verse to say, "In the Spring of the year." However, the *Revised English Bible*, the *New American Bible*, the *New Jerusalem Bible*, and others, rendered this verse literally as the Hebrew says: "At the turn of the year."³⁸⁹

And why would we assume that here the "turn of the year" necessarily means the "Spring?" Consider that if years were counted from Tishri in the Fall, could not that also be thought to be a "turn of the year?" It is interesting that Edwin R. Thiele, who advocated years in Judah reckoned on a Fall-to-Fall basis, somehow curiously believed that in this case the expression should apply to the Spring of the year:

The Chronicler states that it was after the turn of the year (II Chron. 36:10), but it is debatable whether *lithsubathhassanah* indicates the spring or fall turn of the year. In II Sam. 11:1, the same phrase clearly means the spring, Nisan, for it is here qualified as '*eth tse'th melachim*, "the time when kings go forth to battle." In Eze. 40:1 the vision of the temple is dated in "the beginning of the year," the tenth day of the month, "in the five and twentieth year of our captivity," "in the selfsame day," the fourteenth year after Jerusalem was smitten. Which month did the writer have in mind as "the beginning of the year," and which date did he wish to indicate as the beginning of Jehoiachin's captivity, Nisan 10 or Tishri 10? **Since the context is clearly Babylonian, the indications are that the Babylonian month Nisan is intended as the beginning of the year.**³⁹⁰

Obviously, in this context "at the turn of the year" must refer to the Spring of the year, since the capture of Jehoiachin occurred a mere eleven days before the Spring Equinox, which in 597 BCE transpired on March 27th 597 BCE. It would be ludicrous to think that the phrase meant seven months after Nebuchadnezzar took the city. This is another piece of vital evidence that will help us settle the question as to how years were counted at this time in Judah.

We already know that Jehoiachin ascended his throne in December of 598 BCE (2 Kgs 24:8). Even though the *Babylonian Chronicle* does not help us as to when Jehoiakim actually died, Josephus gives us a vital synchronization that gives us insight into this question:

³⁸⁷ Elsewhere Jeremiah used a Nisan calendar when stating that Jerusalem fell in the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah (Jer 39:2; 52:5, 2 Kgs 25:2, 3).

³⁸⁸ Again, this date is a modern construct of the Babylonian calendar, and is accepted by this author as being the same on the reconstructed Hebrew calendar date for Adar 2 would be 16 March 597 BCE.

³⁸⁹ Literally, "Veh-Litshuvat ha-shanah" (וְלִתְשׁוּבַת הַשָּׁנָה). The expression refers to a seasonal change of the year.

³⁹⁰ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 167 (emphasis mine).

[87] But when **Nebuchadnezzar had already reigned four years, which was the eighth of Jehoiakim's government** over the Hebrews, the king of Babylon made an expedition with mighty forces against the Jews, and required tribute of Jehoiakim, and threatened on his refusal, to make war against him. He was affrighted at his threatening, and bought his peace with money, and brought the tribute he was ordered to bring for three years. 2. [88] But on the third year, upon hearing that the king of the Babylonians made an expedition against the Egyptians, he did not pay his tribute.³⁹¹

Here we see that counting regnal years in Judah on a Tishri basis forced us to add an extra year after the death of Jehoahaz, making Jehoiakim's accession year extend from the Fall of 608 BCE to the Fall of 607 BCE. This violated the requirement of the 23-year period from Josiah's year 13 to Jehoiakim's year 4, making it add up to 24 years.

We also have seen that the fourth year of Jehoiakim, according to the same Tishri year calendar, would extend from the Fall of 605 BCE to the Fall of 604 BCE. Yet, the Battle of Carchemish (accepted by all scholars) occurred in the Spring of 605 BCE, making a Tishri calendar in Judah at that time totally impossible. Finally, we had a clear resolution to the problem. Or did we?

Edwin R. Thiele, when confronted with the new evidence presented in 1956 contained in the newly released *Babylonian Chronicle*, rather than conceding that his method of Tishri years was wrong, instead decided to double down on his old position. But, what else could he do? Are we supposed to believe that he would now, suddenly, turn around and throw out his life long thesis? That would never have crossed his mind! He had to still maintain that Jehoiakim ascended the throne in the year of 608-607 BCE, resulting in the burning of the Temple in the Summer of 586 BCE:

After a consideration of all the evidence, however, I am now inclined to date the termination of the reign of Josiah and the beginning of that of Jehoahaz in late Sivan or early Tammuz 609, and the termination of the reign of Jehoahaz and the beginning of that of Jehoiakim in Tishri of the same year.³⁹²

This was no concession speech ("after a consideration ... I am now inclined ..."). His position on Tishri calendar years in Judah hadn't changed one bit. Thus, with a stroke of a pen, Edwin R. Thiele put to rest any last vestige of his credibility and shamefully dishonored his own integrity with this awkward self-inflicted wound. This was his last chance to offer something meaningful to save his theory to the world of his followers, but, alas, how could he in the face of the overwhelming evidence that his life-long theory turned out to be nothing more than a monumental failure.

We painfully see this same scenario played out with another otherwise brilliant scholar, Abraham Malamat, who also stuck to his guns concerning Tishri years,³⁹³ finding some solace in the fact that a few of his fellow scholars also held out like Thiele and Siegfried H. Horn,³⁹⁴ Freedy and Redford,³⁹⁵ and a few others.³⁹⁶ Their last gasp of breath for still clinging to the 586 BCE date for its destruction of Jerusalem revolved around certain statements made by the prophet Ezekiel (which will be addressed shortly). Suffice it to say here, is the fact that it is clear from the evidence that we

³⁹¹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6.1-2 [§§87-8] (Whiston, 272).

³⁹² Thiele, "New Evidence," 25.

³⁹³ Malamat, "Last Kings," 146.

³⁹⁴ Siegfried H. Horn, "The Babylonian Chronicle and the Ancient Calendar of the Kingdom of Judah." *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 5 (1967): 19, 22.

³⁹⁵ Freedy and Redford, "The Dates in Ezekiel," 467.

³⁹⁶ Elias Auerbach, "Wann eroberte Nebukadnezar Jerusalem?" *Vetus Testamentum* 11 (1961): 128-36; Edwards, "Jerusalem's Destruction," 101-106.

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have presented thus far that Judah indeed reckoned their years on a Spring-to-Spring basis, despite the excuses of these other noted scholars. Tishri year reckoning, however, still faced other problems.

Another Problem for Tishri Year Reckoning

As already touched on above, there exists another serious problem for the Tishri year reckoning method that has not been properly addressed by its proponents. If we assume that Jehoiakim's reign began in the year of 608 BCE (because we know that his 11th year must have ended in the year of 598/97 BCE), this would have made his year-one 608-607 BCE, Fall-to-Fall reckoning. This would have made Jehoiakim's year four extend from the Fall of 605 BCE to the Fall of 604 BCE. But since the *Battle of Carchemish* occurred in the Spring, such reckoning would make the battle occur in the Spring of 604 BCE. Yet, all critical scholars agree that the *Battle of Carchemish* occurred in the early Spring of 605 BCE.³⁹⁷

Siegfried Horn, in order to justify his Tishri reckoning scheme, suggested that it was the date of the prophecy that occurred in the fourth year, but not the battle itself.³⁹⁸ Yet Horn himself was forced to admit that such a proposal was "an artificial and unnatural grammatical construction, for which reason this interpretation may not appeal to many scholars."³⁹⁹ Indeed so! Here we have a Tishri year advocate admitting that his own theory is "artificial." Nevertheless, another proponent of the Tishri year theory, Abraham Malamat, came to the aide of Horn's shaky theory:

Horn, however, still retaining a Tishri reckoning, has possibly overcome this [problem] by attributing the date to the prophecy and not to the battle itself.⁴⁰⁰

Nice try. It would appear that both of these Tishri-year advocates sense that their theory needs some sort of life support with explanations such as this, but the reality is that it only shines a light on their failure to uphold a theory that no longer is able to stand on its own support.

Enter Zedekiah

Let us resume the sequence of events in Nebuchadnezzar's year seven recorded in the *Babylonian Chronicle*:

In the seventh year, the month of Kislev, the king of Akkad mustered his troops, marched to the Hatti-land, and encamped against (*i.e.*, besieged) the city of Judah and on the second day of the month of Adar he seized the city and captured the king. He appointed there a king of his own choice (*lit.* heart), received its heavy tribute and sent (them) to Babylon.⁴⁰¹

As noted above "the city of Judah" was the capital city of Judah, Jerusalem. The captured king was no doubt, the 18-year-old Jehoiachin. The death of Jehoiakim is not mentioned in the Babylonian record. The exact date of Judah's capitulation is the "second day of the month of Addaru," *i.e.*, 16 March 597 BCE.⁴⁰² And the king of Nebuchadnezzar's choice could be none other than the uncle of Jehoiachin, Mattaniah, whose throne name became "Zedekiah."

³⁹⁷ Horn, "Babylonian Chronicle," 20; Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 46.

³⁹⁸ Horn, "Babylonian Chronicle," 26, note 33.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁰ Malamat, "Last Kings," 147, note 21.

⁴⁰¹ B.M. 21946, rev. lines 11-13 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 73).

⁴⁰² Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 27; Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 258.

Now here is a very important point to take into consideration. Zedekiah came to the throne four weeks before the New Year month of Nisan in 597 BCE (which occurred on April 13, 597 BCE). In a Nisan calendar, that four weeks would be considered Zedekiah's accession year, and his year one would be counted beginning in Nisan 597 BCE and ending in Adar 596 BCE.

Thus, if this were true, Zedekiah's year one would be equivalent to Nebuchadnezzar's year eight. This means that the final year of Zedekiah's reign would therefore be from Nisan 587-586 BCE. This coincides with Nebuchadnezzar's year 18. Yet, this is in total disagreement with what the Bible tells us. The Bible tells us that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem in his 19th year (2 Kgs 25:8), not his 18th year. It is this discrepancy that convinces most scholars that Tishri years had to have been in vogue in Judah at that time. But why? Because, supposedly, this six-month overlap resolves the discrepancy of these two accounts being a year off from each other.

Okay, so at least we now understand why it is that modern-day scholars use this argument to justify their position. Nevertheless, we have to understand that if years were counted from Tishri, then the period from Adar to Tishri would be Zedekiah's accession year. This obviates that his first regnal year would therefore extend from Tishri 597 BCE to Tishri 596 BCE, and his year 11 would extend from Tishri 587-Tishri 586 BCE.

And, true to form, this was Abraham Malamat's solution to this discrepancy:

Thus, Zedekiah's 1st official year overlapped the second half of Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year which began in Nisan 597 B.C., and the first half of his 9th year. Hence, Zedekiah's 10th year partly overlapped Nebuchadnezzar's 17th year, but also the first part of 18th (Jer. 32:1), and the summer of Zedekiah's 11th year (during which Jerusalem was destroyed —2 Kings 25:2; Jer. 1:3; 39:2; 52:5-6) fell already within the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (2 Kings 25:8; Jer. 52:12), all in full accord with the data given in the Bible.⁴⁰³

This explanation appears to be unassailable on the surface. There is just one thing wrong with this scenario. It is the idea that "it works." But what these scholars have not investigated is to see how it all fits together without having to resort to compromising the Biblical data with the faulty Assyrian data.

The Final Downfall of the Tishri Year Theory

With all the evidence thus far produced in this discussion, it is time to strike the final death blow to the Tishri year reckoning for Judean years as the method for determining the years for the Kings of Judah in its final days.

Number one, Josephus tells us plainly that the siege of Jerusalem occurred over a span of 18 months.⁴⁰⁴ Yet, years counted on a Tishri basis would extend the siege to two and a half years (30 months). So, why is this major discrepancy not a problem with the Tishri reckoning advocates? Indeed, it is this fact alone that shatters a 586 BCE theory for Jerusalem being destroyed in that year!

Freedy and Redford, who are advocates of a Tishri-Tishri reckoning, even recognized this problem and admitted that the Tishri method results in a two-and-a-half-year siege, contradicting the testimony of Josephus, who said that the siege only lasted "eighteen months":

According to 2 Kings 25:1, the siege of Jerusalem began in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month; and lasted,

⁴⁰³ Malamat, "Last Kings," 147-48.

⁴⁰⁴ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10:8:1 [§134] (Whiston, 275).

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on the basis of the information in 2 Kings 25:2f. until his eleventh year, in the fourth month, shortly after the ninth day of the month (Cf. Jer. 39:1, 52:4; Jer. 39:2, 52:5f. for equivalent information). Following the system of calendrical reckoning proposed above, these dates would represent the period between Dec./Jan., 598/88 B.C. and Jun/July, 586 B.C. The investment of Jerusalem thus lasted slightly more than **two-and-one-half years**.⁴⁰⁵

Josephus' account is simply thrown out the window in favor of a modern-day theory to the contrary. Should we not be disturbed by this kind of "scholarship?"

Abraham Malamat was also forced to admit that his Tishri reckoning method resulted in a two-and-a-half-year siege, contrary to the testimony of Josephus:

According to a Nisan calendar, the siege lasted only a year and a half, whereas **two and half years** are inferred by the Tishri reckoning.⁴⁰⁶

Make no mistake about it; the Biblical information is very clear on this crucial point. 2 Kings 25:1 unambiguously states that the final siege on Jerusalem began on in the ninth year of Zedekiah, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month. Jeremiah gives the exact same information, lacking only the day (Jer 39:1). This date is calculated herein as Sunday, January 16, 588 BCE (JD 1506 672).⁴⁰⁷ Edwin R. Thiele, following the reconstructed Babylonian calendar (which is a day too early) uncritically accepted this date without question (as well as most Tishri advocates):

The last event in the checkered history of the Southern Kingdom was the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. This siege began on the tenth day of the tenth month of Zedekiah's ninth year (II Kings 25:1; Jer. 39:1; 52:4;. Cf. Eze 24:1,2), **January 15, 588**.⁴⁰⁸

Since we have the starting date of the siege and its ending date, it is merely a matter of subtraction to figure this out. The siege began in year 9 of Zedekiah, 10th month, 10th day, to when the city fell, viz., year 11 of Zedekiah, 4th month, 10th day ($11^y 4^m 10^d - 9^y 10^m 10^d = 1^y 6^m 0^d$). This calculation represents exactly one year and a half, the precise amount of time that Josephus had informed us, viz., "eighteen months."⁴⁰⁹ So, modern scholars have blatantly abandoned the testimony of both the Bible and Josephus in order to sustain a date of 586 BCE for the destruction of the Temple. Finally, the 586 BCE date for the fall of Jerusalem must now be put to rest. But, hold on, there is even more.

⁴⁰⁵ Freedy and Redford, "Dates in Ezekiel," 467 (emphasis the author's).

⁴⁰⁶ Malamat, "Last Kings," 150 (emphasis mine).

⁴⁰⁷ Scholars, using the dates of the reconstructed Babylonian calendar of Parker and Dubberstein (*Babylonian Chronology*, 28), place the date one day earlier, viz., January 15, 588 BCE. See Finegan, *Handbook* (1964), 205; *idem.*, *Handbook* (1998), 259; *idem.*, *Archaeological History*, 388-89, n. 18.

⁴⁰⁸ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers* (1965 edition), 168 (emphasis mine).

⁴⁰⁹ This time, of course, is measured in lunar years and months. If we assume lunar months equaling 29.5 days and a regular year of 354 days, then we can convert this into years and days for the sake of easier computation. This gives us $10^y 480^d$ minus $9^y 304^d = 1^y 177^d$. Since a regular lunar year contains 354 days, half a year contains exactly 177 days. Of course, Josephus could have done the same arithmetic as done here and obtained the same result. However, in actual solar years, the siege began on Julian Day 1506 672 and Jerusalem fell on Julian Day 1507 232. The difference would be 560 actual days, or 1 solar year (365.25 days), 6 solar months (182.63 days), and 12 days.

The Dates of Scripture versus the Dates of the Babylonian Chronicle

It is time to address the problem that Tishri year advocates see as a huge problem for Nisan year reckoning. That is that there is a one-year difference between how the Bible counts Nebuchadnezzar's years and how the *Babylonian Chronicle* states them? This nagging problem is one that many simply believe cannot be resolved unless we assume a six-month overlap between Babylonian Spring years and years counted from Tishri in Judah. But is this objection really a serious problem? Let us look at the facts.

We have already seen that Jeremiah equated the 4th year of Jehoiakim with that of the first year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 25:1; 46:2), whereas the *Babylonian Chronicle* refers to this same year as Nebuchadnezzar's accession year.⁴¹⁰ Also, King Jehoiachin was taken captive in Nebuchadnezzar's 8th year (2 Kgs 24:2), whereas the *Babylonian Chronicle* says that it was Nebuchadnezzar's 7th year.⁴¹¹

There are no Babylonian records (thus far uncovered) for the latter years of Zedekiah. But what we do know is that Jeremiah said that the siege of Jerusalem began in the 10th year of Zedekiah, which he equated with the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer 32:1). Also, Zedekiah's 11th year was equated with Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year (2 Kgs 25:8). Yet, if we simply count down to Zedekiah's 10th and 11th years, we see that these dates are also one year too high for the equivalent years of the Nebuchadnezzar's in the *Chronicle*.

First of all, it should be recognized that all of these references are internally consistent in this one-year discrepancy. It is obvious that the regnal years of Nebuchadnezzar are dated one year earlier in Judah than those stated in the *Babylonian Chronicle*. Such an important fact should alert us that these numbers represent a consistency for a reason.

We must remember that Nebuchadnezzar "took command"⁴¹² during his father's last year of reign. It is patently obvious what "took command" here means — a co-regency. This fact must have been so in the eyes of the Judeans. Indeed, Jeremiah, when referring to the Battle of Carchemish, expressly called Nebuchadnezzar at this time as the "King of Babylon":

...Concerning the army of Pharaoh Neco, king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates at Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar, **king of Babylon**, defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim ... (Jer 47:2).

In light of this definite statement, we have to ask, how could the crown prince Nebuchadnezzar be already referred to as "king of Babylon" while his father was still alive, unless he was previously recognized as a co-regent at this time? Even Sir Isaac Newton, writing back in the year of 1727, recognized that Nebuchadnezzar was already on the throne when his father died.⁴¹³

The noted Near-Eastern scholar William F. Albright explicitly endorsed the view that Nebuchadnezzar was already on the throne in his father's last year of reign:

The Jeremianic regnal years of Nebuchadnezzar are all one year too high, from the Babylonian point of view: the Battle of Carchemish was actually fought while he was still crown prince, and the two falls of Jerusalem were in his seventh and eighteenth years, not in the eighth and nineteenth. This is correctly stated in the interpolated passage which we have mentioned. It is well known

⁴¹⁰ B.M. 21946, *obv.* line 12 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 69).

⁴¹¹ B.M. 21946, *rev.* line 13 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 73).

⁴¹² B.M. 21946, *obv.* line 2 (Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 67).

⁴¹³ Newton, *Chronology*, 38: "604. Nabopolassar dies, and is succeeded by his Son Nebuchadnezzar, who had already Reigned two years with his father."

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that there was a difference of a year in two methods of reckoning the reign of Sennacherib, so I propose that we assume the same to have happened in reckoning the years of Nebuchadnezzar. In the West the latter had been king *de facto* since he took command of the army in the last months of 606/5, after his father had returned in Shebat (roughly February) to Babylonia. During the whole of the following spring and summer, until his father's death, Nebuchadnezzar was in sole command of the army in the field, as far as we know. Under such circumstances it would scarcely be remarkable if his western subordinates began to reckon his regnal years in 605/4 instead of a year later. The chronology of Jeremiah would then be the normal Western calculation, and not a specifically Jewish way of counting years.⁴¹⁴

David Noel Freedman is another noted scholar who concurred on this important point and also agreed with Albright's opinion in the following commentary. Here, he goes on record as stating the following:

It is possible that the Palestinian historian, without using an ante-dating system, nevertheless reckoned Nebuchadnezzar's reign from the year 605 rather than the official 604. By 605, Nabopolassar was no longer active in the field. At the battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar was in sole command of the Babylonian army, and may well have been recognized in the west as *de facto* king. For the Judahite historian then, Nebuchadnezzar's first regnal year would have been 605/4, equivalent to the accession-year of the official chronicle.⁴¹⁵

Another noted modern-day scholar, J. Phillip Hyatt, also confirmed the fact that Nebuchadnezzar and his father shared the throne in his father's last year:

It is obvious that Kings uses a system which reckons the accession year as the first year of a king's reign, whereas Jer 52 employs the Babylonian system which does not count the accession year, but reckons as the first year of a king the year beginning with his formal coronation in Nisan following his accession.⁴¹⁶

Finally, Jack Finegan, one of the most noted Biblical chronologists of our time, agreed with this assessment:

In general, therefore, these references to the 'eighth year' and the 'nineteenth year' probably represent a view of Nebuchadnezzar's regnal years in terms of something like a non-accession-year system. In particular they may represent a method of citing Nebuchadnezzar's regnal years which was used in Syria-Palestine where it was considered that he was already king (since he was really acting in that capacity) when he came for the Battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. and where, accordingly, 605/604 was counted as his first regnal year rather than 604/603. But what in this Syrian-Palestinian usage were called the eighth and nineteenth years of Nebuchadnezzar were in standard Babylonian usage his seventh and eighteenth years.⁴¹⁷

Other noted scholars who have endorsed the co-regency method are Martin Noth⁴¹⁸ and John Bright.⁴¹⁹ Their conclusions should not be brushed aside by those who dismiss it to support their

⁴¹⁴ Albright, "Neriglissar Chronicles," 32.

⁴¹⁵ Freedman, "Babylonian Chronicle," 56-57, quoted from *The Biblical Archaeologist Reader*, ed., David N. Freedman and George E. Wright (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961), 122-23.

⁴¹⁶ Hyatt, "New Light", 278.

⁴¹⁷ Finegan, *Handbook* (1964) 208-09. For further discussion see Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*, 2:590-95.

⁴¹⁸ Martin Noth, "Die Einnahme von Jerusalem im Jahre 597 v. Chr.," *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-vereins* 74 (1958): 155.

⁴¹⁹ Bright, *History of Israel*, 326, n. 45 "Kings apparently reckoned from 605 when Nebuchadnezzar actually took power; Jeremiah from his first official year."

failed theory. Abraham Malamat⁴²⁰ deemed this solution not even worthy of discussion, stating only that it was an “unlikely assumption,” referring his readers to Siegfried Horn’s criticism.⁴²¹

Freedy and Redford, however, were far more outspoken against any idea of a co-regency. But of course, that would be what one would expect from them since they were staunch supporters of the 586 BCE date for the Fall of Jerusalem anyway; and they certainly had a reputation that had to be upheld, in any case, protected. Indeed, their caustic comments were specifically designed to squash the entire idea of a co-regency. Their reasoning was that a co-regency would of necessity presuppose that

a special treatment of Nebuchadrezzar’s regnal years by scribes in the Levant, who ignored his accession year and began numbering his years in 606/605 B.C. **when he took over military command.** The Babylonian system, on the other hand, began numbering one year later, in 605/604 B.C. But the numbering of a foreign king’s regnal years was of no concern to a scribe of a distant kingdom whose own monarch’s reign sufficed for the practical purpose of dating everyday business transactions. In no way would a second date by Babylonian reckoning have been required in a Judean document as a parenthetical explication of one of Jehoiakim’s (or Zedekiah’s) regnal years. Nor would Nebuchadrezzar’s regnal years ever have interested Judaeans scribes if that foreign potentate had not involved himself dramatically in Judah’s history by terminating the existence of that state, and carrying away its population into captivity.⁴²²

Lest anyone be swayed by this human reasoning strategy, one should consider that if the Biblical scribes could care less about the dating system of Babylon, then how is it that they were able to make the distinction between the two systems? Indeed, it is obvious that the positions of Freedy and Redford are all about saving a flawed theory which they now must know is indefensible within scholarly circles. Their bellicose rhetoric is just so much double-speak in an attempt to defend their impossible position on this matter. The reality is that we are witnessing the demise of a very unsound theory that is in fact no longer sustainable by the proof that has already been presented herein.

The fact of the matter is that the difference in the dating systems of the Bible and the *Babylonian Chronicle* is an important key, if not the greatest key, to unlocking the overall problem of the chronology of ancient Israel. There was indeed a one-year co-regency with Nebuchadnezzar and his father Nabopolassar. That is a fact that must be recognized that leads us to a final solution to the overall problem. And that solution forces us to conclude that the Kingdom of Judah during this period reckoned its years just like every other Levant nation, which was on a Spring-to-Spring basis. And coming to that monumental realization therefore further forces us to conclude that the Fall of Jerusalem must have occurred in the Summer of 587 BCE and not at any time later.

Dated Events in the Book of Ezekiel

The *Book of Ezekiel* records some 15 date references⁴²³ that are either tied to some prophetic oracle or to an actual event in Ezekiel’s experience while he was in Babylonian Captivity. His prophecy begins:

In the **thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month,** as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw

⁴²⁰ Malamat, “Last Kings,” 148.

⁴²¹ Horn, “The Babylonian Chronicle,” 22-23.

⁴²² Freedy and Redford, “Dates in Ezekiel,” 465-66.

⁴²³ Ezekiel 1:1; 1:2; 3:16; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1; 29:17; 30:20; 31:1; 32:1; 32:17; 33:21; 40:1.

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visions of God. **On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin),** the word of the Lord came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar, and the hand of the Lord was on him there (Ezek 1:1-3, emphasis mine).

Thus, Ezekiel gives a series of dates that he ties to the time when Jehoiachin was taken captive. It is generally understood that these years are to be reckoned on an inclusive basis.⁴²⁴

The question of how to accurately date Ezekiel's time references also boils down to when Jehoiachin was taken captive and whether this was at the same time that Ezekiel was taken captive? We first must settle this issue before we move on.

Were Ezekiel and King Jehoiachin Taken Captive Together?

It has generally been accepted by modern scholars that Ezekiel and Jehoiachin were exiled at the same time. Is this assumption true? Let's see, because this is a very important point that must be settled before we can reach a solution to the overall problem. Hayyim Angel stated:

Ezekiel was a priest exiled from Jerusalem in 597 B.C. E. along with king Jehoiachin and some 10,000 Jerusalem's elite citizens (2 Kings 24:11-14).⁴²⁵

Jack Finegan also stated:

When Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar on Addaru 2 (Mar 16) 597 all "except the poorest of the land:" (2 Kgs 24:14) were carried off with Jehoiachin into the Babylonian Captivity, and the priest Ezekiel was **presumably** among those taken away at that time."⁴²⁶

"Presumably?" Floyd Nolen Jones also is one who accepted this assumption:

All of Ezekiel's dates are referenced to the 597 BC deportation of Jehoiachin. ... Additionally, Ezekiel used King Jehoiachin's deportation as his point of reference because he himself was also carried away to Babylon with the monarch at that time ...⁴²⁷

Are we beginning to see a pattern here? But where is the proof of these assertions? Again, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary* gives us the answer:

It is likely that Ezekiel was among the first group of Jerusalem citizens deported to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar conquered the city for the first time in 598 B. C. E. (2 Kgs 24:10-17).⁴²⁸

There are many more testimonies that could be cited that attest to this same supposition, and they all cite 2 Kings 24 as the basis for their contention. But if one consults this passage there is nothing within it that mentions the fact that Ezekiel was among the exiles with Jehoiachin. So, how did these and many more scholars come to their conclusions based upon this passage? Notice that they cover themselves with words like "probably", "presumably," or "likely", concerning whether Ezekiel and Jehoiachin were exiled together. Scholars today never seriously address this matter, but we should understand that there are actually four different exiles of the Jews to Babylon. And it is

⁴²⁴ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 265. This means that whatever year which is given, say "n," in reality is subtracted from the starting date as "n-1." Thus, Jehoiachin was taken captive in Nisan 597 BCE, and this date is to be considered year 1 of Jehoiachin's captivity. Therefore, year 5 would be 597 - (5 - 1) = 593 BCE.

⁴²⁵ Hayyim Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest - Prophet, *Jewish Quarterly Review* 39:1 (2011), 36.

⁴²⁶ Finegan, *Chronology*, 264 (emphasis mine).

⁴²⁷ Jones, *Chronology*, 128.

⁴²⁸ Lawrence Boadt, "Ezekiel, Book of," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, David Noel Freedman, ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 2:713.

this understanding of the different exiles to Babylon that will finally resolve the problem of when Jerusalem fell.

The Four Babylonian Exiles

There were actually four different times that the Judeans were taken captive to Babylon. Scholarly discussions never address this fact. It is these distinctions that are most important in unraveling the intricacies of the overall problem of the date of the Fall of Jerusalem.

The first exile was in the third year of Jehoiakim, 607/06 BCE, when the young prince Daniel and his colleagues were sent to the court of Nebuchadnezzar, who

brought some of the Israelites of the royal family and of nobility, young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans (Dan 1:3-4).

The second exile occurred when the armies of Nebuchadnezzar came in December of 598 BCE. Josephus records that it was at this time that Nebuchadnezzar's army

[97] ... slew such as were in the flower of their age, and such as were of the greatest dignity, together with their king Jehoiakim, whom he commanded to be thrown before the walls, without any burial; and made his son Jehoiachin king of the country and of the city: [98] he also took the principal persons in dignity for **captives, three thousand in number**, and led them away to Babylon; **among whom was the prophet Ezekiel**, who was then but young.⁴²⁹

Wait a minute! Did Josephus just say that Ezekiel was exiled at the time that Jehoiakim was deposed and Jehoiachin was installed? If that is the case, then obviously, Ezekiel and Jehoiachin could not have been exiled at the same time. Hasn't anybody noticed this before? Jehoiachin ruled another three months before he was exiled to Babylon. So, this whole idea that Ezekiel and Jehoiachin were exiled at the same time must stand challenged based upon the testimony of Josephus. It seems unthinkable that modern scholars never picked up on this fact before. Certainly, this vital detail plays a pivotal clue in determining whether the Fall of Judah occurred in 587 BCE or 586 BCE.

This significant testimony tells us a very important thing in the entire history of what was occurring in the run-down of the sequence of events to the Fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel was sent to Babylon when Jehoiakim was killed in December of 598 BCE, and not at any time later. It is this time-line that Jewish tradition assigns the date of this captivity to Kislev 3,⁴³⁰ which corresponds to Sunday, November 19, 598 BCE (JD 1503 326).⁴³¹ This is when Ezekiel, along with some 3000 Judeans, was taken captive to Babylon. But this is not the time when Jehoiakim's son, Jehoiachin, was taken to Babylon. That deportation occurred the next calendar year. This distinction of the two deportations are probably the most critical point in understanding the entire question as to what year the Fall of Jerusalem occurred in, as we will see.

The third exile occurred three months later when Nebuchadnezzar deposed King Jehoiachin and installed Zedekiah in his place. We already know that Jehoiachin was deposed by Nebuchadnezzar on the 2nd of Addaru in Nebuchadnezzar's year 7, Saturday, March 16, 597 BCE (JD 1503

⁴²⁹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6.3 [§97-98] (Whiston, 272).

⁴³⁰ Lyons and de Sola, *Jewish Calendar*, 29.

⁴³¹ This date is the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar date used in this study by the author. It should be noted that Nov. 19, 598 BCE in the Parker and Dubberstein Calendar answers to Arahshamnu 1, or to put it another way, the reconstructed Babylonian date for Kislimu 3 is said to be Dec. 20, 598 BCE, which would be a month later.

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444),⁴³² at the “turn of the year” (2 Chr 36:10). This was only four weeks before the new year commenced in Babylon on Nisanu 1, Saturday, April 13, 597 BCE (JD 1503 472).

The account in the book of *Second Kings* of this deportation describes how Nebuchadnezzar

cut in pieces all the vessels of gold in the temple of the LORD, which King Solomon of Israel had made, all this as the LORD had foretold. He carried away all Jerusalem, all the officials, all the warriors, **ten thousand captives**, all the artisans and the smiths, no one remained, except the poorest people of the land (2 Kgs 24:13-14).

This account assuredly forces us to believe that there was a certain amount of time involved that had to have transpired after Jehoiachin surrendered before the deportation could finally get under way. The Babylonians cut down the large pieces of gold into easier and more manageable components for transportation. Rounding up and shackling 10,000 captives also must have been an enormous undertaking, 7000 of which were men of valor ready for war, and another 1000 artisans (v.14). The analysis of Floyd Nolan Jones on this important detail merits consideration.

It naturally follows that selecting a vassal, establishing a new government, cutting in pieces the gold vessels in the temple (2 Kings 24:13) and preparing the vast booty for transport before returning to Babylon requires time. Moreover, 2 Kings 24:14-16 tells us that the populace was divided and all the leaders, the most affluent, the surviving warriors of valor, masons, smiths, and carpenters — at least 10,000 of the cream of Judah’s citizenry — were separated from the poorest of the common people and then carried away to the Chaldean homeland. Such an undertaking would also have required time.⁴³³

We do not have an exact date for when this exile finally got under way — or do we? In Ezekiel 40 we read:

In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the **beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month**, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, **on that very day** (Ezek 40:1, emphasis mine).

Notice the phrase “on that very day.” It must refer to an anniversary of some kind that occurred on that same date. It could not refer to the day when the Temple was destroyed because that happened on the fifth month in a Nisan year (or the eleventh month on a Tishri year). When it says “beginning of the year” it must assuredly refer to the first month of a Nisan reckoned year. This allusion to an anniversary in Nisan could only mean that the third captivity finally got under way on Nisan 10, 597 BCE, *i.e.*, Monday, April 22, 597 BCE (JD 1503 481).

This date makes perfect sense with the known facts of the deportation, which apparently took a matter of weeks to organize and finally complete. This is another important piece of evidence to understand in order to resolve the issue of the date references in Ezekiel.

The fourth exile, of course, was after the final destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple, which occurred Sunday, July 30 (Av 10) in 587 BCE (JD 1507 232).

⁴³² This Babylonian date has been delivered to us in the Babylonian tablet secured in the British Museum (numbered as BM 21946 [Wiseman, *Chronicles*, 49]). Accordingly, Parker and Dubberstein’s reconstruction of the Babylonian calendar equates that date as falling on March 16, 597 BCE (*Babylonian Chronology*, 27). This reconstructed “Babylonian” date has been accepted today by most scholars (*e.g.*, Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 168) and is accepted here as well for reasons explained elsewhere. What is not accepted is that the Babylonians intercalated a second Ululu making Tashratu (Tishri) the eighth month. In the Hebrew calendar, Tishri must always be the seventh month. Therefore, in the Hebrew system, this needed intercalation had to have occurred by intercalating a second month of Adar, as is done to this day.

⁴³³ Jones, *Chronology*, 126.

“Jehoiachin’s” versus “Our” Captivity

Since we now know, based upon the testimony of Josephus, that Jehoiachin and Ezekiel were not exiled at the same time, then we must ask, why did Ezekiel in two places suddenly no longer reference his dating from Jehoiachin’s captivity, but to “our” captivity? Jack Finegan sees this alternate phrase as actually a confirmation that Ezekiel and Jehoiachin were exiled at the same time:

Because the initial dating is in “the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin” (1:2) it may reasonably be assumed that the other dates too are stated in terms of years of Jehoiachin’s exile, and this is confirmed in 33:21; 40:1 where Ezekiel gives dates “of our exile.”⁴³⁴

In other words, Jack Finegan sees the words “our exile” as testimony that Ezekiel and Jehoiachin were indeed exiled at the same time. But if they were not exiled at the same time, as Josephus informs us, then why did Ezekiel introduce the term “our exile?”

Many scholars who hold to a 586 BCE date for the destruction of Jerusalem do so because they believe that Ezekiel is the key to that understanding. Abraham Malamat stated:

... in accepting the Nisan calendar for the regnal years of Zedekiah, whether from 597 or 596, one is challenged by the dates for the final siege and destruction of Jerusalem in the Book of Ezekiel, **which have largely been ignored**. There is general agreement that the dates throughout Ezekiel are based on a Nisan calendar like that used in Babylonia, and are reckoned according to the exile of Jehoiachin which most scholars properly start from Nisan 597 B. C.⁴³⁵

We should note that Ezekiel’s dates are consecutively arranged from chapter one right on through to chapter 33:17 (with the exception of two dates, viz., in 29:17 and 32:1). And what do all these dates have in agreement? They all occur during the time when King Zedekiah was still reigning in Jerusalem and while Jehoiachin was in exile in Babylon. However, once we get to Ezekiel 33:21 and 40:1, there is a change in the method of counting years required due to the fact that now it is after the Fall of Jerusalem and at that time there were now two Jewish kings exiled in Babylonian captivity — not just Jehoiachin, but Zedekiah as well. Obviously, Ezekiel is including his own captivity which began in December of 598 BCE, three months before Jehoiachin’s, and more importantly, in the previous regnal year of Jehoiachin.

At this point Ezekiel now uses the expression “our exile.”

In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, someone who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has fallen” (Ezek 33:21).

Scholars who do not take these facts into consideration have made a serious mistake. It is their contention that Ezekiel 33:21 is the final arbitrator in determining the date of the Fall of Jerusalem. Indeed, they feel that it is this fact alone that solidifies beyond any question that the 586 BCE date must be correct; so it is important to let this last gasp of breath play itself out here:

A Nisan regnal year is also ruled out for Zedekiah’s reign. If, as Albright postulates, Zedekiah began his year in Nisan, and commenced numbering from his accession, the city’s capitulation in the fourth month of his eleventh year would have fallen in the summer of 587 B.C. Ezekiel received news of the disaster in December, 586 B.C. (Ezek. 33:21) from a fugitive. Five months for news to travel to Mesopotamia by such agency is reasonable; but one-and-half years is clearly

⁴³⁴ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 265.

⁴³⁵ Malamat, “Last Kings,” 148-49.

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inordinate. The far more likely alternative is that, following the deportation of Jehoiachin, the first regnal year of Zedekiah was Sept./Oct., 597-596 B.C., and that the destruction of Jerusalem occurred in his eleventh regnal year, *i.e.*, mid-summer, 586 B.C. This is the system of reckoning followed in the books of Kings and Jeremiah and, to that extent, the problem of *chronology* is resolved.⁴³⁶

Not so fast! Faulty reasoning most assuredly does not resolve the “problem of *chronology*”! Here’s why. This alluring point about the fugitive arriving after a five-month journey instead of a full year-and-half journey is a valid point that this author certainly agrees with. Fine! But the problem that these scholars never address is when was the starting point for the counting of these years or whether these years were counted inclusively or exclusively. So, if those matters are not settled (which is a matter that we today, frankly, cannot know) then this argument cannot be held up as a serious objection in any court of law. That these issues are never even addressed by modern scholars is a fact that actually points to dishonest treatment of the facts.

How Long Did it Take the Exile to Travel to Babylon?

Again, we must reiterate what the prophet Ezekiel stated:

In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, someone who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has fallen” (Ezek 33:21).

So, if years began with Nisan, then the 12th year would not begin until the Spring of the next year, and would mean that the 12th year would occur a year and six months after the fall of Jerusalem in the 4th month of the 11th year and the arrival of the escapee in the 12th year, the 10th month. Thus, for the escapee to be traveling for a year-and-half would certainly be “inordinate.”

The scholar William F. Albright, who advocated a Nisan calendar in Judah, recognized the problem of the year and half journey for the refugee to make it to Babylon was an argument that he had to address. And he explained his way out of the dilemma by attributing the text to a scribal error. Thus, his suggestion was to emend the Hebrew text from the 12th year to the 11th year:

The date of the arrival of news concerning the fall of Jerusalem (Ez. 33 21), given as the twelfth year in א, should be corrected to the eleventh, as seen by all the commentators; the only change required is the substitution of עשתי-עשרי for עשרי-שתי, just as in 26 1. In 40 1 there is a double dating, the 25th year of the captivity being equated with the fourteenth year after the fall of Jerusalem.⁴³⁷

Of course, Freedy and Redford were correct in thinking that emending the text was a desperate solution to the problem, which they eagerly summarily dismissed:

Albright, *JBL* 51 (1932), p. 96 advocates emending the date here to read ‘eleventh’ year, but this is legerdemain to accommodate a theory. It has only dubious MS and Versional support and disrupts the inherent order of the dates beginning at 29:1.⁴³⁸

Nevertheless, this is where the Tishri year supporters misunderstand the significant point about the different exiles and the change in Ezekiel’s reference points. Unfortunately, even the careful chronologist Jack Finegan uncritically based on this text from Ezekiel 33:21:

⁴³⁶ Freedy and Redford, “Dates in Ezekiel,” 466-67.

⁴³⁷ William F. Albright, “The Seal of Eliakim and the Latest Preëxilic History of Judah, with Some Observations on Ezekiel,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 51:2 (June 1932): 96.

⁴³⁸ Freedy and Redford, “Dates in Ezekiel,” 466, note 25. But then they contradict themselves on page 468, note 30.

The date of the final fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar has been established above (§442) as Tammuz 9 (July 18) 586. In the twelfth year of what Ezekiel calls “our exile,” in the tenth month, on the fifth day of the month, a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to him and said, “the city has fallen” (Ezek 33:21). The twelfth year of the exile was 586/585 (Table 123), the tenth month is Tebeth (Dec/Jan), and in 585 the fifth day of Tebeth was Jan 8. From July 18 to the following Jan 8 the man had taken somewhat less than six months for the journey. The time compares favorably with a full four month required by Ezra for a journey in the reverse direction under peaceful circumstances (Ezra 7:9, see below §459).⁴³⁹

So, there you have it, all wrapped up neatly and seemingly all objections put to rest. But do notice that Finegan subtly supplies the date of 586 BCE for the Fall of Jerusalem right up front of his argument. In other words, he uses this argument to cement his claim that the Fall of Jerusalem occurred in 586 BCE, by interjecting that date to begin with. What kind of slight-of-hand, circular reasoning, is that? This constant game of “catch me, if you can” never ends.

As pointed out above, Ezekiel, during the reign of Zedekiah, referenced all his dates from the deportation of Jehoiachin on Nisan 10, 597 BCE (Monday, April 22, JD 1503 481). But as soon as King Zedekiah was deported to Babylon Ezekiel started saying that the reference point was now from “our captivity.” This meant that he was now reckoning from the time that he himself was deported on Kislev 3 (Sunday, November 19) 598 BCE (JD 1503 326), which is a calendar year earlier than Jehoiachin’s deportation.

So, the date in the 10th month of the 12th year, instead of being what scholars would have us believe, viz., 8 January 585 BCE, should actually be reckoned as occurring on Tuesday, December 19, 587 BCE. So, if we assume a six-month journey for the refugee, then, by this reckoning, the Fall of Jerusalem would occur around July of 587 BCE — exactly where all the evidence places it.

Finally, 2 Kings 25:2-4 and Jeremiah 39:2 combine to tell us that the breach of the walls of Jerusalem occurred on the 11th year of Zedekiah, the 4th month, and on the 9th day of the month. (Tammuz 9). This date is therefore fixed as being June 30, 587 BCE (JD 1507 202).

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh brilliantly summed up the correct solution to the problem as follows:

A criticism of the Nisan reckoning of regnal years at the close of Judean history has been based on Ezekiel 33:21. The proper reading of this verse is “twelfth year,” not “eleventh.” With this the Septuagint agrees despite its sometimes variable text. It is soundly argued and it is more logical that only six months — not eighteen months — elapsed between the fall of Jerusalem and the arrival of an escapee in Mesopotamia to bring word to Ezekiel. It has been proposed that a new year with Tishri began two months after the captivity. If, on the other hand a Nisan dating were used, a year and six months would have elapsed between the fall of Jerusalem in the twelfth year, the tenth month. The criticism is valid, and that is the very reason some who hold to a Nisan reckoning propose altering the text. But the answer is in the text itself. Up to this point in time Ezekiel reckons by the captivity of Jehoiachin. Here and in Ezekiel 40:1 however, he uses a different expression: “our captivity.” Now Ezekiel was taken captive three month earlier than Jehoiachin, at the time of the death of Jehoiakim. Kislev 3 is a traditional date commemorating this event on the Hebrew calendar. Ezekiel chose to date events by his captivity, rather than by the king Jehoiachin’s captivity, as there were now two Jewish kings in captivity at Babylon — Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. The twelfth year of Ezekiel’s captivity commenced with the ninth month — Kislev 3. So a date in the tenth month would be in the succeeding or twelfth year. Hence the escapee was only six months in reaching Ezekiel.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁹ Finegan, *Handbook*, (1998), 265.

⁴⁴⁰ Hoeh, “Nebuchadnezzar,” 8-9.

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Why Ezekiel chose to use the ambiguous words “our captivity” instead of “my captivity” is a curiosity, and certainly would have been a lot clearer. Apparently, however, he was now referring to the captivity that he himself was a part of in distinction to the captivity of Jehoiachin.

The Significance of Ezekiel 40:1

We now focus on the second verse in Ezekiel that also uses the formula “our captivity” as the basis for reckoning the date referenced therein:

In the twenty-fifth year of **our exile**, at the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the **fourteenth year after the city was struck down**, on that very day (Ezek 40:1).

Edwin R. Thiele, once again, believed that this verse seals the deal for a Tishri year reckoning and the summer of 586 BCE for the fall of Jerusalem:

Although the Babylonian tablets dealing with the final fall and destruction of Jerusalem have not yet been found, it should be noticed that the testimony of Eze. 40:1 is definitive in regard to the year 586. Since Ezekiel had his vision of the temple on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his and Jehoiachin’s captivity (April 28, 573),⁴⁴¹ and since this was the fourteenth year after Jerusalem’s fall, the city must have fallen eleven years after the captivity. Eleven years after 597 is 586. Any attempt to date the fall of Jerusalem earlier than 586 would call for an earlier date than 597 for Jehoiachin’s captivity, and that is not possible, for that date has been fixed by contemporary Babylonian evidence.⁴⁴²

Thiele’s reasoning is confusing because he uses exclusive reckoning in his logic. But notice the date that Thiele placed in parentheses, *viz.* April 28, 573 BCE, was derived on an inclusive basis. If we add 25 years (exclusively) to that date, we get the year 598 BCE. Likewise, if we add 14 years (exclusively) to 573 BCE we get the year 587 BCE. So, right off the bat, Thiele’s arithmetic is biased, and demonstrates just the opposite of what he was trying to prove.

In fact, if one consults Thiele’s chart on pages 170-71 of his book, to which he refers his readers supposedly clarifying everything, it is apparent that he counts the years of Ezekiel 40:1 from the accession of Jehoiachin in 598 BCE — not when Jehoiachin was taken captive in 597 BCE. Obviously, Thiele interchanges inclusive reckoning along with exclusive reckoning indiscriminately, which the average reader would fail to detect. Yet, Thiele himself stated that the 25th anniversary was that of both “his (Ezekiel’s) and Jehoiachin’s captivity.” Really? Then why does he at the same time claim that “it is not possible” for the dating to be reckoned from “earlier than 597?”⁴⁴³

Nevertheless, the fact that Ezekiel used the “our captivity” formula for dating the 25th anniversary again should be counted from November 19, 598 BCE. And this yields the correct date of April 8, 574 BCE (JD 1511 867). This is the 14th year from the date of the destruction of Jerusalem (inclusively reckoned), which points right back to the year of 587 BCE for the fall of Jerusalem.

⁴⁴¹ April 8, 574 BCE (JD 1511 867).

⁴⁴² Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 169.

⁴⁴³ Thiele also indiscriminately interchanges Nisan years with Tishri years in his counting (*ibid.*, 167-68).

Criticism of the “Our Captivity” Hypothesis⁴⁴⁴

A criticism could be lodged against the view that “our captivity” refers to Ezekiel’s captivity, a calendar year before Jehoiachin’s. One could rightfully ask, if Ezekiel 33:21 counted years from Ezekiel’s captivity and results in a date of December 19, 587 BCE, then why do we find an earlier reference in Ezekiel, viz. 32:17, that does not use this formula, which would result in a date from Jehoiachin’s captivity of three months later, April 26, 586 BCE?

Answer: First of all, it must be admitted that we do not know the date of King Zedekiah’s death. His eyes were put out and he must have suffered an extremely torturous captivity. Therefore, it is not unreasonable that Zedekiah had died in the period after December 19, 587 BCE, but before April 27, 586 BCE. If that is the case, then Ezekiel would then logically revert back to dating events pinned to Jehoiachin’s captivity since Zedekiah was no longer a captive in Babylon, but now deceased.

It also should be noted that the later date occurs in the text before the earlier date. This out of sequence dating raises the question of whether we are dealing with a text that is correct or has alternative attestations. No such criticism has been found by this author over this date.

Also, if we assume that the year 12 should be year 11, then this places the date of Ezekiel 32:17 before the date of Ezekiel 31:1, a solution that seems to have more problems than it solves. So, the death of Zedekiah in captivity around February/March 586 BCE seems to be the most plausible solution.

Nevertheless, if this solution is to stand, then why do we see the formula “our captivity” used in Ezekiel 40:1, years after Zedekiah died? It is possible that this summary statement was used as an overall view from Ezekiel’s captivity as a concluding statement to his entire experience.

Even though Ezekiel 29:1 goes another two years beyond this date, and does not use the “our captivity” formula, it only reinforces the view that Zedekiah was deceased at this time and should not be seen as a problem with the fact that Ezekiel was deported a calendar year before Jehoiachin, and his deportation, referenced by the rubric of “our captivity,” does not alter the fact that Ezekiel 33:21 should be referenced from this date.

In summary, the dates in Ezekiel are here established for the first time based upon the two captivities of Ezekiel.

Dates of Jehoiachin’s Captivity from Nisan 597 BCE

Table 11:

| Ezekiel Passage | Vision/ Oracle | Year/ month/ day | Hebrew Date | Weekday | Julian Date | Julian Day |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1:1-3:15 | First vision | 5/4/5 | Tammuz 5 | Sabbath | July 1, 593 | 1505 012 |
| 3:16-7:27 | Second vision | 5/4/12 | Tammuz 12 | Sabbath | July 8, 593 | 1505 019 |

⁴⁴⁴ The distinction between “our captivity” and “my captivity” had also been discussed by Adam Rutherford, *Chronology*, 48.

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Table 11:

| Ezekiel Passage | Vision/ Oracle | Year/ month/ day | Hebrew Date | Weekday | Julian Date | Julian Day |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|---------|--------------|------------|
| 8:1-19:14 | Third vision | 6/6/5 | Elul 5 | Sunday | Aug. 19, 592 | 1505 426 |
| 20:1-23:49 | Elders inquire | 7/5/10 | Ab 10 | Monday | Aug. 12, 591 | 1505 784 |
| 24:1-25:17 | Siege begins | 9/10/10 | Tebeth 10 | Sunday | Jan. 16, 588 | 1506 672 |
| 26:1-28:26 | Against Tyre | 11/(?)/1 | (Nisan? 1) | Sabbath | Mar. 25, 587 | 1507 105 |
| 29:1-16 | Against Egypt | 10/10/12 | Tebeth 12 | Sabbath | Jan. 7, 587 | 1507 028 |
| 29:17-30:19 | Egypt again | 27/1/1 | Nisan 1 | Sunday | Mar. 27, 571 | 1512 951 |
| 30:20-26 | Egypt again | 11/1/7 | Nisan 7 | Friday | Mar. 31, 587 | 1507 111 |
| 31:1-18 | Egypt again | 11/3/1 | Sivan 1 | Sunday | May 23, 587 | 1507 164 |
| 32:1-16 | Egypt again | 12/12/1 | Adar 1 | Monday | Mar. 3, 585 | 1507 814 |
| 32:17 - 33:20 | Egypt again | 12/(12?)/15 | Adar 15 | Monday | Mar. 17, 585 | 1507 828 |

Dates of Ezekiel's Captivity Counted from Kislev 3, 598 BCE

Table 12:

| Ezekiel Passage | Event | Year/ month/ day | Hebrew Date | Weekday | Julian Date | Julian Day |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|----------|--------------|------------|
| 33:21-39:29 | Escapee arrives | 12/10/5 | Tebeth 10 | Tuesday | Dec. 19, 587 | 1507 374 |
| 40:1-48:35 | Temple vision | 25/1/10 | Nisan 10 | Saturday | Mar. 28, 573 | 1512 222 |

The Meaning of Ezekiel's Thirtieth Year

The *Book of Ezekiel* opens up its narrative with the following date references:

In the **thirtieth year**, in the **fourth month**, on the **fifth day of the month**, as I was among the exiles by the river Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. On the **fifth day of the month** (it was **the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin**), the word of the Lord came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar, and the hand of the LORD was on him there (Ezek 1:1-3).

Since we are not told exactly when the “thirtieth year” is counted from, then we are cast adrift in a sea of speculation as to the significance of “the thirtieth year” could possibly portray. Indeed, some scholars have simply thrown up their hands and declared that it is a problem that eludes us:

So much scholarly ink has been spilled over the vexed question of the significance of the ‘thirtieth year’ in 1:1 that it is fruitless to augment the pool or to trouble it fur-

ther. All is speculation; the wisest remark is perhaps that of H. H. Rowley who admits that "I know of no wholly satisfactory solution." The annotation at v. 2, although a gloss, seems correctly to explicate the date as June/July, 593 B.C. This is compatible with the fact that the second date in the book (8:1) [*sic*: third date] is fourteen months later than the time of the inaugural vision. It is also consistent with the dating pattern evident throughout the book. ... more than that cannot be said.⁴⁴⁵

Nevertheless, this is an issue that we could hardly ignore, and the reality is that it is not a difficult one to resolve if we understand the context of the times. Let us, therefore, review some of this speculation and offer a real solution to this entire problem. Lawrence Boadt summarizes the problem:

...Ezekiel had visions of God in the thirtieth year. Since the next line (1-2) says that the throne vision in Babylon took place in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, it must be decided whether the initial date is a duplicate of that event from another perspective, or whether it marks a time when all of Ezekiel's words were written down many years later. If it does duplicate the date of 1:2, then it signifies either that the prophet was thirty years old at the time (born therefore in 623-622 B.C.E.), or that it had been thirty years since some important event, perhaps the finding of the law book in the temple by Josiah's reformers in 622 (2 Kgs 22:8). If it marks a general date for the composition of the book, it could be also understood in a number of ways: it could refer to 568, thirty years from King Jehoiachin's exile; or to 563, thirty years from Ezekiel's call; or to an uncertain year which marked the thirtieth year of the current Jubilee period (cf. Leviticus 25). It is probable that the dates in 1:1 and 1:2 refer to the same event because both name the Kebar canal.⁴⁴⁶

These options summarize as follows:

- 1) Age of Ezekiel (623/2);
- 2) 30 years from Jehoiachin's exile (568/7);
- 3) 30 years from Ezekiel's Call (563);
- 4) Reference to the 30th year of a Jubilee cycle;
- 5) Anniversary of finding the Book of the Law (622);

There is another option that some scholars maintain, and that is that the word "thirtieth" should be emended to read "third year."⁴⁴⁷ However, this option can be dismissed as not only unfounded, but represents a compromise to the text that is unwarranted.

The Thirtieth Year: The Age of Ezekiel?

Tyler D. Mayfield offers this possibility:

The sequence of dating also reveals an interesting suggestion concerning Ezekiel's time of ministry and his background as a priest. The first date reference in the book is equivalent to 593 B.C.E. and the last is 573 B.C.E., a twenty year span that strikingly corresponds to the Levitical priests' length of service (Num 4:3, 23, 30). Furthermore, the first date mentions the thirtieth year, which possibly specifies Ezekiel's age at the time of his first vision, corresponding to the year the Levites begin service.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁵ Freedy and Redford, "Dates in Ezekiel," 468.

⁴⁴⁶ Lawrence Boadt, "Ezekiel, Book of," *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 2:713.

⁴⁴⁷ C. F. Whitley, "The 'Thirtieth' Year in Ezekiel 1:1," *Vetus Testamentum* 9:3 (July 1959): 326-30. Indeed, even though Whitley accepts this solution, he states that: "Emendation is indeed the last resource of an exegete and its justification alone lies in the offer of an acceptable reading," *ibid*: 330.

⁴⁴⁸ Tyler D. Mayfield, *Literary Structure and Settings in Ezekiel*. (Philadelphia: Coronet Books Inc., 2010), 91. Also, James E. Miller, "The Thirtieth Year of Ezekiel 1:1," *Revue Biblique* 99:3 (July 1992): 499-503.

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This, of course, is all speculative. In fact, it ignores a primary statement in Josephus who said that Nebuchadnezzar had taken

the **principal persons in dignity** for captives, three thousand in number, and led them away to Babylon; **among whom was the prophet Ezekiel, who was then but young.**⁴⁴⁹

Those who believe that a thirty-year-old, mature male fits this description “who was then but young” are seemingly now pressing a theory that fails any logical explanation.

It is more likely that Ezekiel was about the same age as King Jehoiachin, say no more than 20 years of age. They may have grown up together at the royal court. Certainly, Ezekiel, who was of a priestly family, was schooled in a literary education. And where did he get his literary skills? Most likely from the same tutors as Jehoiachin and may have been close friends as a result and this could explain why Ezekiel recognized Jehoiachin as the legitimate heir to King David’s throne, and why he dated his prophecies specifically from Jehoiachin’s exile.

As to the idea that Ezekiel, being a priest, would have begun his prophetic work at the age of 30 to conform with the age that priests begin their priestly careers (Num 4:3), this idea can also be dismissed on two points. First, Ezekiel did not embark on a career as a priest. And second, even if he did, we must take into consideration that King David had changed the 30-year-old requirement to the age of “twenty years old and upward” (cf. 1 Chr 23:24-27; 2 Chr 31:17).

furthermore, one should realistically ask the question, that in the maelstrom of Ezekiel’s prophecies, is it to be expected that Ezekiel was all concerned about letting everyone know how old he was? This seems hardly a consideration that we can take seriously.⁴⁵⁰

Indeed, would one refer to his own birth as “**the** thirtieth year” as opposed to “**my** thirtieth year?”⁴⁵¹ Such an impersonal reference rebuffs any logical thought that this could be an attestation to Ezekiel’s birth year. Thus, this speculative solution should be dismissed summarily as a baseless conjecture that ignores a fundamental tradition that Ezekiel was a “young” man at the time.

The Thirtieth Year: Jehoiachin’s Exile?

William F. Albright is among a few scholars who held that the “thirtieth year” represented the end of Ezekiel’s mission in 568/7 BCE in terms of Jehoiachin’s exile.

The thirtieth year is the date of original publication by the prophet, or with his knowledge. The following is a direct quotation, describing the beginning of the prophet’s mission, which was not published until twenty-five years later, i.e., B.C. 568/7.⁴⁵²

Bullinger counters this view with the following commentary:

⁴⁴⁹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10.6.3 [§98] (Whiston, 272) (emphasis the author’s).

⁴⁵⁰ In order to appreciate the lack of hard evidence for the theory of Ezekiel’s age, some have resorted to speculating that Ezekiel merely was adopting some stylistic method as seen in the narrative of Noah’s date references in Genesis 8:13. So S. G. Taylor, “A Reconsideration of the ‘Thirtieth Year’ in Ezekiel 1:1,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 17 (1966): 120: “there is an adequate stylistic affinity between Ezekiel 1:1 and Genesis 8:13 to warrant a stronger acceptance of the traditional view, namely, that the ‘thirtieth year’ of Ezekiel 1:1 does refer to the age of the prophet at the beginning of his ministry.”

⁴⁵¹ The *New International Version* blatantly exercises a most egregious bias and mistranslation here by rendering this verse as: “In **my** thirtieth year.” That is not what the text says at all. Indeed, this is one of the many reasons why the NIV is one of the most egregious translations of the Bible that has ever been produced.

⁴⁵² Albright, “Seal of Eliakim,” 97. See also his chart on page 86.

The 30th year of 1:1,2 cannot be in succession to the 27th year of ch. 29:17-21, because the visions of ch. 1 and 10 had already been seen, and the one recorded in ch. 10 is said to have been similar to that already seen in ch. 1. Moreover, if it be in succession to the 27th year, why is it brought into the very beginning of the book without any reason being assigned, or hint given?⁴⁵³

Bullinger's point is spot on, and seems to be an acceptable rejection of the "thirtieth year" proposal which has no compelling persuasion for acceptance. Let us move on.

The Thirtieth Year: Ezekiel's Call?

If the "thirtieth year" represents an end of Ezekiel's ministry, verse one of his book of prophecies seems like an odd place to assign such a notation without any explanation to that effect.

It is interesting that this interpretation would culminate in the year of 563/2 BCE, exactly the same year as the death of Nebuchadnezzar and the end of Jehoiachin's bondage in Babylon. It thus would seem more than unlikely that Ezekiel made no attempt to tie this date with such a significant event. At any rate, such a view is entirely speculative and is tied to no known historical fact.

The Thirtieth Year: References to the Jubilee?

The suggestion that the thirtieth year has a connection with the Jubilee years is supported in some Midrashim, Rashi, Rabbi Yosef Kara, and RaDaK (Rabbi David Kimchi).⁴⁵⁴

In support of this view, Heinrich Guggenheimer comments:

Since Josiah had the Temple renovated in the Jubilee year, the thirty years are also years of the Jubilee cycle. Probably, the author [of the *Seder Olam*] prefers here the reference to finding the Torah since that is expressly mentioned in the Aramaic *Targum Jonathan* for this verse. Since Jehoiachin was exiled in the middle of the Jubilee period, the year 30 is the fifth year of his exile.⁴⁵⁵

In other words, since Ezekiel's initiation occurred in the thirtieth year from the previous Jubilee year (which supposedly

occurred right at the time of Josiah's reformation) this fact ties in with the notion that Josiah's reform is the start of the 30 year period. Setting aside the reference to a Jubilee year, there is merit for the theory that it begins with King Josiah's Reform. Let's see why.

The Thirtieth Year: Anniversary of Josiah's Reform?

Out of all the options that we have thus surveyed, we come to the only one that makes real sense — the anniversary of Josiah's reform. Certainly, one of these options has to be the right one. And it is this one that has the Scriptural backing and the greatest attestation. And unlike H. H. Rowley, who infamously said "I know of no wholly satisfactory solution,"⁴⁵⁶ this solution is not only "wholly satisfactory," but must be the correct one for the following reasons.

The fifth year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin fell within the year of 593/92 BCE.⁴⁵⁷ Counting backward 30 years inclusively puts us squarely in the year of 622/21 BCE, which is the 18th year of Josiah.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵³ Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, 1105.

⁴⁵⁴ Angel, "Ezekiel: Priest-Prophet, 35-45.

⁴⁵⁵ *Seder Olam* 3:26 "Exechiel" (Guggenheimer, 224).

⁴⁵⁶ H. H. Rowley, "The Book of Ezekiel in Modern Study," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 36 (1953): 182.

⁴⁵⁷ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 264.

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After the *Book of the Law* was read to King Josiah, Huldah the prophetess was consulted about the work. Her response was an oracle, stressing the importance of this great find (2 Kgs 22:8-20). Thereupon, the king assembled all the elders and made a covenant to obey all the words of the Torah (2 Kgs 23:1-3).

Josiah began to purge the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, including all Judean cults from Geba unto Beer-sheba (2 Kgs 23:4-14). Even the temple in the northern shrine at Bethel and all other pagan temples in the Samarian territories were destroyed (2 Kgs 23:15-20). Immediately after this, Josiah, in compliance with the Book of the Law that had just been found, held the biggest Passover celebration ever observed in Jerusalem up until that time (2 Kgs 23:21-23).

Thus, the 18th year of Josiah was no insignificant year. Indeed, it was a watershed year for the Kingdom of Judah in terms of the entire redirection of its religious fervor, as well as its governing principles that flew in the face of Assyrian hegemony. Without a doubt, in Judean history, this year should be regarded as the most significant event since the Exodus. Indeed, it should have been commemorated on the calendar, at least on the par with Hanukkah or Purim (wonder why it isn't).

Those who would turn a blind eye to this significant epoch year in Judah's history must re-evaluate their position in the light of all other options and the implication of this historical and momentous occasion.

The rabbinical sages were certainly aware of the significance of Josiah's 18th year. The Targum of Ezekiel 1:1 assigns the "thirtieth year" as being counted

... from the time that Hilkiyah the high priest found the book of the Torah in the Temple, in the court, under the porch, in the middle of the night, after the rising of the moon, in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of the tribe of the house of Judah.⁴⁵⁹

Likewise, the *Seder Olam* states:

(Ez. 1:1) "It was in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day ...," thirty years after the Book of the Law was found in the temple.⁴⁶⁰

These events were so significant that it can only mean that a new era had begun in Judah. Ezekiel certainly wanted to contrast his prophecies with the backdrop of that era. Although the reforms and Josiah's repentance initially gave the people hope, it was only a temporary hope that lasted as long as Josiah remained alive, as explained above. Thus, the thirtieth year in Ezekiel 1:1 equates with the fifth year of Jehoiachin's exile mentioned in verse 2 in the above chart.

The fact that Josiah ripped his clothes, and the prophetess Huldah still reaffirmed the prophesied edict against Jerusalem signified that this event began the first stage in the progression that would finally culminate in the final calamity of Jerusalem's fate.

The Date of the Destruction of Jerusalem

The emerging picture that we have surveyed is that the Jewish Kings most definitely reckoned their reigns on a Spring-to-Spring calendar in agreement with the Babylonians. This means

⁴⁵⁸ The full account of Hilkiyah finding the book of the Law of Moses in the 18th year of Josiah is given in 2 Chronicles 34:8-33 and 2 Kings 22:8-13.

⁴⁵⁹ Quoted from David J. Halperin, *Faces of the Chariot: Development of Rabbinic Exegesis of Ezekiel's Vision of the Divine Chariot* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1988), 128.

⁴⁶⁰ *Seder Olam* 3:26 "Exechiel" (Guggenheimer, 224).

that there was no imaginary overlap between Babylonian years and Judean years as promoted by professors Thiele, Malamat, Horn, Redford, and a few other scholars.

Jehoiakim's reign came to an end in November of 598 BCE due to a siege that was conducted by collateral forces of Nebuchadnezzar. This was Jehoiakim's year 11. He was bound in fetters ready for deportation, but for some reason was killed instead. It was also at this time that Ezekiel was exiled, traditionally held to be on Kislev 3, 598 BCE (November 19, 598 BCE, JD 1503 326). Jehoiachin was then installed and reigned for three months. He next was deposed on Addaru 2, 597 BCE (March 16, 597 BCE, JD 1503 444), year 7 of Nebuchadnezzar. Jehoiachin and his family, along with 10,000 other prisoners, were exiled back to Babylon on Nisan 10, 597 BCE (April 22, 597 BCE, JD 1503 481).

Zedekiah was placed on the throne in Adar of 597 BCE (his accession year) and his first year officially began on Nisan 1, 597 BCE (April 13, 597 BCE, JD 1503 472). Therefore, Zedekiah's 11th year extended from Nisan 1, 587 BCE (March 25, 587, JD 1507 105) to Veadar 29, 586 BCE (April 11, 586 BCE, JD 1507 487), and not any time later. This important fact alone means that the destruction of Jerusalem could not have occurred in the summer of 586 BCE, otherwise it would have occurred in Zedekiah's twelfth year.⁴⁶¹

Also consider that the siege began in the ninth year of King Zedekiah, beginning on the tenth day of the tenth month — a date that is firmly attested to in Scripture,⁴⁶² and arguments to the contrary are simply no longer subject to debate.

From these facts it is clear that only a Nisan year calendar extends from Zedekiah's ninth year on April 15, 589 BCE to April 4, 588 BCE; on a Tishri based calendar Zedekiah's ninth year would extend from Oct. 9, 589 BCE to Sept. 29, 588 BCE. In either case, Tebeth 10 can only occur in 588 BCE, *i.e.*, January 16, 588 BCE.

How Long was the Siege?

The final blow to the 586 BCE date is grounded in the following question; "How long was the siege of Jerusalem?" This question alone puts the entire supposition of the year of the destruction to bed. Indeed, this is the final *argumentum a fortiori* that should have been asked at the very beginning of the discussion because it truly is the tiebreaker of all of the evidence thus far presented. And for shame, modern scholars have seemingly dodged this question by sweeping it under the rug. How suspicious is that? Inquiring minds need to ask, why? Simple! It demolishes their 586 BCE theory so thoroughly that some scholars simply refuse to address it.

Let us now understand the facts. Josephus tells us that the siege lasted 18 months.⁴⁶³ There's the answer right there before our very eyes. Twelve months from the beginning of the siege would bring us to January, 587 BCE. Another six months thereafter places the siege around July of 587 BCE. The Bible also confirms the testimony of Josephus, placing the breach of the walls on Tammuz 9, *i.e.*, June 30, 587 BCE (JD 1507 202). Such an amazing corroboration between Josephus and the Bible is nothing short of a total affirmation of everything that has been presented thus far.

⁴⁶¹ Henceforth, every history book, Encyclopedia, commentary, and so on, must now abandon the date of 586 BCE for the destruction of Jerusalem once and for all. Yet, realistically, consensus faces the hard reality of stubborn opposition based on nothing more than either entrenched institutional precedent, which in turn is self-sustained by the entire notion.

⁴⁶² 2 Kgs 25:1; Jer 39:1-2; 52:4; Ezek 24:1-2.

⁴⁶³ Josephus, *Ant.*, 10:8:1 [§134] (Whiston, 275).

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The Temple was destroyed on the 10th day of Ab in Zedekiah's year eleven, viz., on July 30, 587 BCE (Jer 52:12-13, [JD 1507 232]). Chronologist Jack Finegan accurately fills in the final details:⁴⁶⁴

II K 25:1 states that the siege began in the ninth year of Zedekiah, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month; and Jer 39:1 gives the same information, lacking the day. This date was equivalent to Jan 15, 588 B.C. Jer 32:1-2 states that the siege was still in progress and the prophet Jeremiah was in custody in the tenth year of Zedekiah. This regnal year was 588/587. II K 25:2-4 and Jer 39:2 record that a breach was made in the city in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, on the ninth day. This was July 29, 587. On the seventh day of the fifth month according to Jer 52:12, Nebuzaradan, servant of Nebuchadrezzar, came and burned Jerusalem and the Temple. These dates were Aug 25 and 28, 587 B.C.⁴⁶⁵

The Day of the Week in the Year of the Destruction

According to the above testimony, we have the following sequence of events:

Sequence of Events in the Fall of Jerusalem

Table 13:

| Hebrew Date | Julian Date | Weekday | Julian Day | Event |
|-------------|--------------|----------|------------|---|
| Tebeth 10 | Jan. 16, 588 | Sunday | 1506 672 | Siege begins ^a |
| Tammuz 9 | June 30, 587 | Friday | 1507 202 | Breach of the Walls ^b |
| Ab 7 | July 27, 587 | Thursday | 1507 229 | Nebuzaradan enters Jerusalem ^c |
| Ab 10 | July 30, 587 | Sunday | 1507 232 | Temple razed |

a. 2 Kgs 25:1.

b. 2 Kgs 25:8; Jer 39:2; Jer 52:5.

c. 2 Kgs 25:8.

Jewish tradition has the First Temple destroyed on the 9th day of Ab on the Hebrew Calendar (known as “Tisha B’Av”). But this is wrong. Jeremiah's testimony clearly says that it was on the 10th day of Ab that the Temple was destroyed. What many modern Jewish scholars have lost sight of is the fact that it is not because the Temple was burned on the ninth of Ab, but the fact that the day of fasting and the reading of the *Book of Lamentations* was to be done on the day *before* the calamity of that heinous event occurred.

Also, since it is believed that the Second Temple was also destroyed on the ninth day of Ab on the Hebrew Calendar in 70 CE, it may be that the Jews wanted to memorialize both events as occurring on the same day.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶⁴ Thiele's Julian dates are derived from Parker and Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology*, 28.

⁴⁶⁵ Finegan, *Handbook* (1964), 205-06. Finegan, unfortunately, changed his position from being a 587 BCE advocate in his 1964 edition of his book, to being a 586 BCE advocate in his 1998 edition (*Handbook*, [1998], 258-59). By so doing, he was forced to accept the false premise that “The siege went on for slightly more than two and one-half years ...” Why would a careful scholar like Finegan do this? Apparently, he could not reconcile the one-year difference in the counting of Nebuchadnezzar's years according to the *Babylonian Chronicle* with the dates given in the Bible.

⁴⁶⁶ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 105-6, citing *Ta'anith* 4:6, Danby, 200.

What is interesting about this date is that the Talmud states that the actual day of the week that the First Temple was burned was a Sunday, (even though it says that it was the ninth of Ab). And by calculation of the most likely date for the 10th of Ab in the year of 587 BCE, it appears that this date actually did fall on a Sunday.⁴⁶⁷

Notice the Talmudic discussion surrounding this date:

[ON THE NINTH OF AB] THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED THE FIRST TIME. For it is written, Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the King of Babylon, unto Jerusalem. And he burnt the house of the Lord etc. [2 Kgs 25:8-9]. And it is further written, Now in the fifth month, in **the tenth day of the month**, which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, who stood before the king of Babylon into Jerusalem etc. [Jer 52:12]. With reference to this it has been taught: We cannot say that this happened on the seventh, for it has already been stated that it was 'in the tenth'; and we cannot say that this happened on the tenth, for it has already been stated that it was 'on the seventh'. How then are these dates to be reconciled? On the seventh the heathens entered the Temple and ate therein and desecrated it throughout the seventh and eighth [of Ab] and towards dusk of the ninth they set fire to it and it continued to burn the whole of that day, as it is said, Woe unto us! for the day declineth, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out. [Jer 6:4]. And this is what R. Johanan meant when he said: "Had I been alive in that generation I should have fixed [the mourning] for the tenth, because the greater part of the Temple was burnt thereon." How will the Rabbis then [explain the contradiction]? — **The beginning of any misfortune is of greater moment.**

AND [THE TEMPLE WAS DESTROYED] THE SECOND TIME. Whence do we know this? For it has been taught: Good things come to pass on an auspicious day, and bad things on an unlucky day. It is reported that the day on which **the First Temple was destroyed was the eve of the ninth of Ab, a Sunday**, and in a year following the Sabbatical year... (Ta'anith 29a).⁴⁶⁸

By comparison, the 586 BCE date does not yield a Sunday for this event. Here is what Jack Finegan contributed to the discussion:

In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month — which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar — Nebuzaradan, Nebuchadnezzar's captain of the bodyguard, came to Jerusalem; he burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem, and his army broke down the walls around the city; ... The date of his coming, specified as the seventh day of the fifth month in 2 Kgs 25:8, is given in Jer 52:12 as the tenth day of the fifth month. The fifth month of the year is Ab (July/Aug); in 586, Ab 7 was Aug 14, and Ab 10 was Aug 17.⁴⁶⁹

If Ab 10 in the year 586 BCE fell on August 17th, then the day of the week would have fallen on a Friday (JD 1507 615), and Ab 9 would therefore have been the day before, viz., a Thursday (JD 1507 614).⁴⁷⁰ Unfortunately, Jack Finegan mistakenly believed that Ab 9 fell on a Saturday:

⁴⁶⁷ The reconstructed Babylonian Calendar of Parker and Dubberstein (p. 28), clearly has the date of Ab 10 a month too late, viz., Aug. 28, 587 BCE. Even though such a date would fall on a Monday (and the 9th on a Sunday), such a late date would push Tishri 1 out to October 18th, which would place the festival of Succoth way past the harvest and Shemini Atzeret on November 8th. Clearly, such a calendar reconstruction is way out of the question for any realistic date that would fall under the priestly guidelines of the Hebrew calendar in order to be within the Holyday season.

⁴⁶⁸ *Soncino Babylonian Talmud*, tr. Isadore Epstein, (London: The Soncino Press, 1935-48), online at <http://hal-akhah.com/> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022). That 588 BCE was a Sabbatical year follows the chronology established on page 165.

⁴⁶⁹ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 105-06.

⁴⁷⁰ Even if the month of Ab was a whole month earlier in the year 586 BCE, Ab 9 would have fallen on July 17th, 586 BCE — a Tuesday (JD = 1507 585) and Ab 10 on a Wednesday.

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At any rate, rabbinic tradition dealt with the two specific days of Ab 7 and Ab 10 by supposing that they encompassed a certain sequence of events and focused on Ab 9 as the beginning of the major conflagration of the temple, thus it is this day in particular, **identified as a Saturday**, which has remained in melancholy remembrance.⁴⁷¹

Finegan provides no source for his Saturday date for the burning the Temple. We must therefore conclude that it has no support in any of the sources, otherwise he would have noted them. And since the year 586 BCE is the wrong year anyway, further discussion would be pointless.⁴⁷²

For whatever value that this interesting discussion has to the date of the Fall of Jerusalem, it has at least added the reassuring fact that even in the traditional day of the month (Sunday), the fall of Jerusalem doesn't fit with the year of 586 BCE but does with 587 BCE.

Summarizing this Chapter

It is now time to put all the pieces together. This author has carefully shown the methodology of his research.⁴⁷³ Of course, however, many will disagree with the conclusions, for whatever personal or denominational reason. Many would rather cling to old ideas rather than revisit all the assumptions that have beset an accurate Biblical chronology up until now.

It is important to state that personally, this author has no particular ax to grind, nor religious agenda to promote. The evidence is simply put on the table for all to review. It will be only unbiased analysis that will take its course. It is up to those who have a thirst for the truth to investigate those facts out for themselves.

But here is the real question: How does this "Biblical chronology" square with the histories of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, and the rest of the ancient world? Obviously, it is a given fact that no critical, modern-day secular scholar would ever take the chronology of Scripture seriously. But we should not feel daunted once we realize that the chronologies of the ancient world is a modern-day reconstruction that deliberately seeks to discredit the Bible. So, this then gets into the whole area of chronological "Revisionism," which is totally rejected by modern scholars.⁴⁷⁴

Needless to say, there is still a lot of ground to cover. But at least now we can take a deep breath that we have finally overcome the main obstacles that have been so elusive down through the centuries among so Biblical chronologists. We are now armed with a solid Biblical chronology that can now be used as a basis to restore the chronology of the ancient world.

But before we get into all of that, it is now time to reconstruct the chronology of the Bible itself with new dates that will serve as the backbone of events in secular history. This we must do era by era before any realistic secular history can be restored.

⁴⁷¹ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 259-60.

⁴⁷² Jewish tradition places the year of the conflagration on the Hebrew Calendar in the year of 3336 = 425 BCE. Although the year 425 BCE is 162 years too late from the actual date, at least it could be said that a retro-calculated date for Ab 10 in that year fell on August 6th, also a Sunday. Very interesting.

⁴⁷³ When this author first set out to write this book he didn't know where it would lead. But with the date of 3971 BCE for the creation of Adam finally secured, it was a revelation even to himself where this investigation has taken his own personal research. The astonishing result was that the year 2030 became the six thousandth year from the creation of Adam.

⁴⁷⁴ The real chronological revisionists are modern secular scholars. This work is not revisionism, but rather a restoration of Biblical truth.

2030

Let us now go onto this exciting adventure and see how beautifully a restored Biblical chronology fits exactly with the true chronologies of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and the rest of the ancient world. Such a thrilling adventure will enlighten us of the ancient world as never before.

The Pre-Flood Period



CHAPTER 4

THE PRE-FLOOD PERIOD

The Human Family Begins

I IS NOW TIME TO PUT TOGETHER A BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME represents the truth of Scripture, as well as the history of the ancient societies of this world.

The story of the family of Adam begins in the year of 3971 BCE. Adam was the first “human being” — or should we dare say, the first “Homosapien.”

We should not be intimidated by pre-human skeletal remains discovered known as “Australopithecines” or some “*Homo erectus*” (upright man) type hominid creatures found in Africa, or elsewhere. These bi-ped skeletal remains were not modern human beings. They may be categorized as human prototypes, “working models,” for what was later to become in the form of a God-breathed human known as “Adam.” They may even share some DNA with modern human beings, but that should not divert us from this study of the chronology of the family of Adam.

Adam must be distinguished from the animal world in that he was God-breathed (Gen 2:7). Adam had a spirit imbued within him which allowed him to reach the highest of intellectual achievements in science, literature, athletics, art, *etc.*, while at the same time descending to the lowest levels of human depravity, cruelty, and evil. Animals have no such distinction within their makeup. Animals are encoded with instinct. Animals do not think nor reason. But most important of all, human beings, unlike the animal world, have the potential of graduating to an even a higher level of existence, becoming an eternal spirit-being. But that is another story beyond the scope of this work.

The Solar/Lunar Calendar of Creation

From the Biblical record Adam was created one day before the seventh day of the week — the day that we are informed that God rested (suspended creative activity). Therefore, Adam was created

on what we call Friday. Furthermore, Jewish tradition has Adam being created on Tishri 1. If that is so, then day one of creation, *i.e.*, Sunday, would be equivalent to Elul 25 on the Hebrew calendar.

It is interesting that if we try to retro-calculate the modern Hebrew Calendar back to the Autumn of 3971 BCE, it works out that the new moon conjunction for Tishri of that year would fall on Sunday, September 19, 11^h, 630^p, or 5:35 AM Jerusalem time. This would make it occur about an hour before sunrise in Jerusalem time. Such an occurrence would then make Tishri 1 coincide with the first day of the week, which would make sense for the beginning of calendar calculation.

However, astronomically calculated, the real conjunction would have occurred on Monday, September 20, 4:42 PM, Jerusalem local time — about a day and a half later. Of course, the Hebrew Calendar uses a mean value for the synodic month, even though the actual astronomical conjunction varies from month to month due to the elliptical nature of the Moon's orbit. Therefore, the actual position of the moon is not that important to calendar calculation.

Interestingly, neither of these calculations support a Friday Tishri 1 date. And if we look at the years 3972 BCE or 3970 BCE, we still cannot get a New Moon conjunction falling on a Friday.⁴⁷⁵

Of course, the modern Hebrew Calendar has rules of postponement that exclude Tishri 1 from ever falling on a Sunday or a Friday (none of which were in practice then. Nevertheless, it would appear that Hebrew Calendar calculations do support an average value for the first conjunction that places it on the first day of the week).⁴⁷⁶

The Pre-Flood World Overview

The Pre-Flood World is a time in human history, covering 1656 years. Among the descendants of Adam's son, Seth, we must surmise that a method of writing had developed, as well as a means of measuring time. The family of Seth preserved an accurate record of their genealogy and chronology. Noah kept a logbook on the Ark wherein he recorded the events on the Ark for over a year. On the other hand, the family of Cain preserved no chronology of its descendants, which begs the question of their literacy.

Historically speaking, the pre-Flood World would be considered prehistoric times. Archaeologically speaking, this period represents a time that has been designated as the Stone Age. Intellectually speaking, humans were at their infancy in the development of basic everyday life: *viz.*, growing grain, grinding flower, making pottery, drying fruit, domesticating cattle and fowl, *etc.*

Among the descendants of Seth were people like Enoch, who is said to have walked with God (Gen 5:24), and of course, Noah, who is referred to as a “preacher of righteousness” (2 Pet 2:5). But Cain, and his descendants, are recorded as the ones who brought about judgment upon the pre-Flood World which initiated the Flood itself.

The Archaeology of the Pre-Flood World

The scholarly community does not recognize such a term as “Pre-Flood World,” simply because this is a term that is derived from the Bible, which, of course, they consider to be nothing

⁴⁷⁵ Could it be that the miracle of the sun's shadow going back ten degrees on the sundial of Ahaz (2 Kgs 20:8-11, Isa 38:7, 8), or the time of “Joshua's Long Day” (Josh 10:12-14), voids any modern astronomical calculations prior to these times?

⁴⁷⁶ Further study on this subject would require far more time than can be devoted here in this volume. The author intends to give a full treatment on the Hebrew Calendar in a future study.

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more than ancient Hebrew mythology and propaganda. So, in order for them to discuss archaeological remains that are “pre”-historical, they had to invent a term that is more to their liking. And the term that they came up with was — “Stone Age.”

And, as scholars are prone to do, they always divide eras into three parts. For example, in the case of most periods that scholars define, there is always a beginning stage, and there is always an end-stage, and there is something in the middle. In other words, to get from the beginning to the end, of course, there has to be some transitional stage. And true to form, the Stone Age is divided into these very stages known as Paleolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic. And, depending upon the specific area, these broad designations are broken down even further. This dividing up of ages can also be recognized in the historical periods of the so-called “Bronze” and “Iron” ages.

The important thing to remember about such terms is that they are in theory supposed to represent an evolutionary progression of early human development. But since we know that all cultures do not progress at the same rate, then a better term than “ages” would be to refer to these categories as just what they are “cultures.” These categories have only a minimal sense of chronology as far as human development is concerned since some of these periods were actually contemporary — and still are to this day!

We, today, live in a world where there are “stone age cultures” existing in the remote regions of this world, despite the fact that the mainstream world lives in the most advanced technological world as any before. When the Europeans finally arrived on the shores of the American continent, they were met by the native peoples who were still living in a Neolithic culture. Their impact on the environment was not much more than the animals of the forest. Thus, we should not be alarmed at bold statements that would seek to make the Bible in conflict with archaeological remains.

The Paleolithic culture (Old Stone) is characterized by chipped stone tools, and food gathering peoples in the Middle East. And we would have to categorize this culture as represented in the family of Cain. He was driven out of Eden to the Land of Nod and became a fugitive and a nomadic itinerant (Gen 4:12). We know the story of how Cain slew his brother Abel. His violent disposition apparently was genetic. His descendants could be said to have been the cause of God’s wrath on that generation of humans.

The Mesolithic culture, of course, is that intermediate or transitional period that is supposed to bridge between Paleo- and Neolithic times.

Toward the end of the Paleolithic, and in the transitional period called Mesolithic, or Middle Stone Age, some drastic changes took place. By then ... a new technique of tool-making abruptly appeared, and with it came other new expressions of spiritual and social life. New kinds of art, new ways of burying and of worshiping the dead, new criteria, but most of the new ones had precise and special purposes. This specialization, revealed by remains of implements found in caves and camp sites, is a considerable revolution in itself. It probably indicates also some drastic changes in the economic organization of the human group.⁴⁷⁷

When we get to the Neolithic culture (New Stone) we see that it is distinguished by polished or ground stone tools. And more specifically it is characterized by food production rather than food gathering. The Neolithic culture featured settled agriculture, domesticated animals, such as cattle, sheep, pigs, and dogs.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁷ Emmanuel Anati, *Palestine Before the Hebrews* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 40.

Now, it should be understood that in the Genesis story, Neolithic culture came first — not Paleolithic. Cain and Abel were originally food producers, not food gatherers. Then Cain was driven out of Eden and reduced to a Paleolithic Culture, wandering and gathering his food. It is not until the last half of Genesis 4 that we see the family of Cain achieving a Neolithic culture again. Also, the “Pre-Pottery Neolithic A” period of Jericho witnessed an economy based upon trade. We may therefore surmise that post-Flood Jericho could be the pre-Flood city of Cain.

So all of these so-called levels of the “Stone Age” eras are represented within the first millennium of Adam’s family — certainly not within two hundred thousand years of evolutionary progression. We should also note that the average life span of people in the pre-Flood era was nearly a thousand years. That is why we find few skeletal remains buried in the Paleolithic culture.

The Nephilim of Genesis 6:4 (not fallen angels!) may be represented by Neanderthal remains in southern France.⁴⁷⁹

Where in Archaeology is the Flood?

After the Neolithic period comes what scholars have designated as the Chalcolithic period. And what we find is that the last stages of the Neolithic period is represented by a huge population explosion:

Several Neolithic sites were found along the strip of land at the foot of the hills, near the entrances of the wadies (in the Esdraelon Valley). The pattern of these settlements are extremely interesting. Most of them were composed of a single house, ranging in size from 65 by 25 feet to 30 by 15 feet. These obviously are sites of single households; these settlements cover the whole cultivable area between the rocky hills and the marshy plain. Unlike the sites even seem to mark the line of a main highway along the Esdraelon Valley from west to east, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan Valley. Also unlike the incipient settlements of the side wadies, this strip of land was very thickly inhabited in Neolithic times, and the density of population must have been then one of the greatest in Palestine. Frequently the distance from one settled spot to another is no more than a thousand feet.⁴⁸⁰

What we are witnessing here is a perfect description of Genesis 6:1-3, which tells us that 120 years before the Flood is a period when “people began to multiply on the face of the ground (earth).”

Yet, when we move into the Chalcolithic period, this vast population in Palestine has virtually disappeared. And when George Ernest Wright first published his article on “The Archaeology of Palestine” back in 1965,⁴⁸¹ his first chart showed under the heading: “Transition: Neolithic-Chalcolithic, c. 5000-4300 B.C.,” that under the “Economy” description, it merely records: “Not well represented in Palestine.” Why? Are we not now witnessing a basic lack of population in Palestine, wherein the Upper Neolithic, the population was exploding?

⁴⁷⁸ Pre-Flood Jericho is described as “Pre-pottery Neolithic.” Pre-Flood Jericho may very well be Cain’s city of “Enoch” (Gen 4:16-17).

⁴⁷⁹ See an interesting write-up by John Denton, Bible Research & Investigation Co. n.d., online at http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/vida_alien/alien_watchers06.htm (accessed on Mar. 9, 2022).

⁴⁸⁰ Anati, *Hebrews*, 231.

⁴⁸¹ George E. Wright, “The Archaeology of Palestine,” in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. G. E. Wright, (New York: Double-Day Anchor Books, 1965), 95.

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Next, in Wright's chart number 1 under the heading: "Early Chalcolithic, within the period c. 4300-3600 B.C.," again under the "Economy" description is: "Only fragments, which suggest a number of small country villages."

So, what we are witnessing here is that in the Upper Neolithic period there is a huge population explosion in agreement with Genesis 6:1-3, and then we find a massive population drop in Palestine from the Neolithic to Chalcolithic periods. This is nothing short of confirmation to a Flood-break from Neolithic to Chalcolithic as witnessed by the material remains discovered by archaeologists.

Dr. Herman L. Hoeh acutely observed:

The land which boasts the most complete archaeological record [in the Near East] is Palestine. This is partly an empty boast. The only really early city that is thoroughly documented is Jericho. Hardly any of the other early Palestinian sites are known. By contrast, much of early Syria and Mesopotamia is better documented.

Early Jericho begins with a "Prepottery Neolithic A" culture. The duration of this culture extended over a few centuries, though it is carelessly maximized by archeologists many more hundreds of years.

The period of this culture is pre-Flood, as is the succeeding "Prepottery Neolithic B." It is found in strata X to XVII. It is a period of intense warfare. The city walls were being constantly rebuilt. The story of Jericho is really the account of the great walled city Cain built before the Flood. Jericho had walls long before any other city. See the latest excavation reports by Miss Kenyon.

Thereafter two new cultural strata occur. Each is a period of great retrogression, as if some calamity had befallen the people. Each is separated by a span of time in which the site was depopulated. The inhabitants used pottery.

The site of Jericho hereafter was for several centuries abandoned. The population of Palestine disappeared. This is the period of the Flood, of human depopulation, and the meager beginnings of the new post-Flood world.⁴⁸²

Thus, the Chalcolithic period represents the beginning of the post Flood period dating from 2315 BCE.

The Pre-Flood Chronology

The key dates for the Pre-Flood chronological period from the Biblical revelation can now be broken down as follow (dates italicized are estimated):

Pre-Flood Chronology

Table 14:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Source |
|----------|---------|--|---------|
| 3971 | 0 | Creation of Adam and Eve on Tishri 1 | Gen 2:7 |
| 3900 | 71 | <i>Adam's firstborn son, Cain, slays his brother, Abel</i> | Gen 4:8 |
| 3841 | 130 | Birth of Seth, Adam age 130 | Gen 5:3 |
| 3736 | 235 | Birth of Enos, Seth age 105 | Gen 5:6 |

⁴⁸² Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:475-77; See also 2:329.

Table 14:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Source |
|---------------------|--------------------|--|----------------|
| 3646 | 325 | Birth of Cainan, Enos age 90 | Gen 5:9 |
| 3576 | 395 | Birth of Mahalaleel, Cainan age 70 | Gen 5:12 |
| 3511 | 460 | Birth of Jared, Mahalaleel age 65 | Gen 5:15 |
| 3349 | 622 | Birth of Enoch, Jared age 162 | Gen 5:18 |
| 3284 | 687 | Birth of Methuselah, Enoch age 65 | Gen 5:21 |
| 3097 | 874 | Birth of Lamech, Methuselah age 187 | Gen 5:25 |
| 3041 | 930 | Death of Adam, age 930 | Gen 5:5 |
| 2984 | 987 | Enoch translated, age 365 | Gen 5:23-24 |
| 2929 | 1042 | Death of Seth, age 912 | Gen 5:7 |
| 2915 | 1056 | Birth of Noah, Lamech age 182 | Gen 5:28-29 |
| 2831 | 1140 | Death of Enos, age 905 | Gen 5:9-11 |
| 2736 | 1235 | Death of Cainan, age 910 | Gen 5:12 |
| 2681 | 1290 | Death of Mahalaleel, age 895 | Gen 5:15 |
| 2549 | 1422 | Death of Jared, age 962 | Gen 5:18 |
| 2435 | 1536 | Noah age 480 is given 120 years before Flood | Gen 6:1-3 |
| 2413 | 1558 | Shem born, Noah age 502 | Gen 11:10-11 |
| 2320 | 1651 | Death of Lamech, age 777 | Gen 5:28 |
| 2315 | 1656 | Death of Methuselah, age 969 | Gen 5:27 |
| 2315 | 1656 | Flood commences, Noah age 600 | Gen 7:6, 11 |
| 2314 | 1657 | Flood ends; Rainbow Covenant | Gen 8:13; 9:16 |
| 2313 | 1658 | Arphaxad born, 2 years after Flood, Shem age 100 | Gen 11:10 |
| 2278 | 1693 | Selah born, Arphaxad age 35 | Gen 11:14 |
| 2248 | 1723 | Eber born, Selah 30 | Gen 11:12 |
| 1965 | 2006 | Death of Noah, age 950 | Gen 9:28 |

The chronology of the pre-Flood period has been established in basic uniformity with most chronologies according to the AM dates. However, we now have the exact equivalent BCE dates solidified finally based upon the Biblical chronology developed herein. Let us continue.

CHAPTER 5

THE PATRIARCHAL PERIOD

*T*HE PATRIARCHAL ERA BEGINS WITH THE DEBACLE AT BABEL AND ENDS AT THE Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt during the time of Moses. It includes the story of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and including Moses, among others in the Genesis narrative. It is this period that lays the foundation of the Hebrew nation, its faith and ultimately the faith of our fathers represented in the final inspired message of Jesus in the later canonized writings of his disciples.

The Biblical chronology of this period has been the subject of criticism by secular scholars because it is at odds with what these scholars have envisioned the chronology of ancient Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and other contemporary nations. The details of these chronologies will be dealt with in forthcoming chapters and volumes. But for now, we need to review how generally secular scholars represent this period.

A Commentary on One Scholar's View of Biblical Chronology

One noted and very vocal scholar of ancient Egyptian history, Donald B. Redford, has ventured to demonstrate in his popular book⁴⁸³ the impossibility of a coherent Biblical chronology. Because of his very outspoken views, which are common among the modern scholarly community, his comments can serve as a point of reference that should be addressed.

⁴⁸³ Donald B. Redford's book, *"Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). Redford's book was granted an award in 1993 for the "Best Scholarly Book in Archaeology" by the *Biblical Archaeological Society*. The main thesis of his book is that the traditions of the "Hyksos" period in Egypt served as the consciousness for the "Deuteronomist's" subtext of the Mosaic tradition found within the *Book of Exodus*. Supposedly, this apparently explains why there was a lack of specific details in the *Book of Exodus* from early Egyptian sources. Thus, Redford was led to conclude that the Exodus story was merely an invention at a time that reflected the conditions in Egypt not earlier than the 26th Dynasty of the 7th century BCE. However, serious students of ancient history should be aware that Redford is an apologist for the modern-day reconstructed false chronology of Egypt that is in total contradiction with the Biblical chronology presented herein, and therefore should not dissuade us from following through on presenting the facts that substantiate the correctness of the Masoretic chronology.

we will use his testimony to speak in general for the entire scholarly community:

A totaling of the lengths of reign of the kings of Judah from Solomon's fourth year (when allegedly the temple in Jerusalem was dedicated: 1 Kings 6:1) to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. yields 430 years and therefore would bring us back to 1016 B.C. for this point in Solomon's reign.⁴⁸⁴

Author's comment: Redford's date for the destruction of Jerusalem is off by one year too late; the correct date is 587 BCE, as we have already solidly established. Next, Redford stated that if we total the years from the destruction of Jerusalem to Solomon's fourth year it amounts to 430 years. Where did he get that figure? The correct number is 426 years (390 + 40 - 4), so the actual date for Solomon's year 4 is 1013 BCE, not as Redford stated, 1016 BCE.

Continuing with Redford's assertions:

Again, according to 1 Kings 6:1, 480 years is supposed to have elapsed between the Exodus and the dedication of the temple, thus producing a date of 1496 B.C. for the former event.⁴⁸⁵

Author's comment: Redford is correct about adding the 480 years to Solomon's fourth year to arrive at the date for the Exodus. However, since he is already three years too high in his dating thus far, the date of the Exodus should be 1493 BCE, not 1496 BCE. But from here on, Redford runs off the rails by making the classic blunder in the length of sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt back to the time of Abraham:

Since the sojourn in Egypt is stated to have lasted for 430 years (Exod. 12:40), the descent of Jacob and his family to the land of Goshen must have taken place in 1926 B.C.⁴⁸⁶

Author's comment: The Bible nowhere states that the 430-year period of time goes back to the time when Jacob came to Goshen. The correct reckoning of this period is from the time when the Covenant with Abraham was confirmed only when Abraham was 100 years of age:

But I say this: The Covenant which was **confirmed** from the first by God in The Messiah, The Written Law [at the time of the Exodus] which was 430 years afterward, cannot cast off and cancel The Promise (Gal 3:17, *Aramaic Bible in Plain English*).⁴⁸⁷

Do note the word "confirmed." Although the Covenant was made when Abraham was 99 years old, it was only "confirmed" with the birth of Abraham's son Isaac the next year in Abraham's one-hundredth year. The Apostle Paul certainly understood this important fact:

Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring: it does not say, "And to offsprings," as of many; but it says, "And to your offspring." that is, to one person, who is Christ. My point is this: the law [at the time of the Exodus], which came four hundred thirty years later [from the confirming of the covenant when Abraham was 100], does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise (Gal 3:16-17).

Floyd Nolan Jones explained it in the following way:

⁴⁸⁴ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 258.

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁷ Dr. Ernest L. Martin maintained that "The only time that a covenant was made with Abraham (after his name was changed from Abram) to which the Apostle Paul could have had reference and one that can be dated in the Bible, was that of Abraham's year 99 as recorded in Genesis 17)." Ernest L. Martin, "Chronology: The Key to Prophetic Understanding - Part 1," see online at <http://www.askelm.com/prophesy/p900901.htm> (accessed on Mar. 9, 2022).

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Exodus 12:40 does not say that the children of Israel sojourned (or dwelt) 430 years in Egypt. It does say that the sojourn of that particular branch of Abraham's lineage as traced through Isaac and Jacob, with which we are specifically concerned, was the group which eventually went down to Egypt. In other words, it is a statement defining and identifying with which of Abraham's lineages the narrative is dealing as Abraham had numerous other lineages. It is through Isaac and Jacob and not by way of Ishmael, Esau, or Abraham's many offspring by Keturah whom he wed after Sarah died (Genesis 23). The verse is telling us which children of Abraham are being focused upon, not how long they were in Egypt.⁴⁸⁸

A better translation of Exodus 12:40 would be:

Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, — [those] who dwelt in Egypt — completed four hundred and thirty years (author's rendition).

Yes, their sojourn was completed at the time of the Exodus, and it was dated 430 years since the time that the Covenant of Abraham was "confirmed" when Abraham was 100 years old. But the word "sojourn" in this context only identified which peoples of Israel that were being talked about — not the full length of time that the Israelites had spent in the land of Egypt.

The actual time from when Jacob came to Goshen to the Exodus was a period of 240 years (as will be shown below). So, right away, Redford is now off by 190 years too high in this section, plus the 3 years in the previous section, so he is actually too early on the BCE time scale by 193 years. In other words, instead of the date for Jacob's migration as occurring in 1926 BCE (as Redford erroneously maintained), the actual date should be 1733 BCE.

Redford continues:

If now we add the lengths of life of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (290) [Abraham, 100 years old at the birth of Isaac (Gen. 21:5); Isaac, 60 years old at the birth of Jacob (Gen. 25:26); Jacob, 130 years old at the time of the descent into Egypt (Gen. 47:9)] we arrive at 2216 B.C. for the birth of Abraham. This would mean that Abraham's arrival in Canaan would have to fall in 2141 B.C. (cf. Gen. 12:4 [at age 75]), and his descent to Egypt (Gen. 12:10-19) between that date and 2116 B.C., or under the 10th Dynasty of Herakleopolis.⁴⁸⁹

Author's comment: Redford now tries to match up his "Biblical dates" with the modern construct of where Abraham should be in terms of the erroneously dated dynasties of Egypt. At this point his whole line of logic hopelessly falls apart and his argument turns into an exercise of an impossible defense of the modern secular chronology of Egypt. But of course, his goal all along was to somehow demonstrate that it is the Bible that cannot be trusted upon for accurate historical dating. Continuing with Redford's assessment:

Jacob's descent would have occurred in Senwosret I's reign, and the entire Sojourn would have occupied the outgoing 12th Dynasty, the entire 13th Dynasty, the Hyksos occupation, and the early [18th] Dynasty to Hatshepsut's ninth year!⁴⁹⁰

Author's comment: All through the period of Joshua/Judges, the Bible only mentions Egypt in a passing way, referring to the time when the Israelites left Egypt, but no contemporary mention of Egypt during that entire 400-year time. At no time was Dynasty 12 or 13 a part of this period.

But continuing:

⁴⁸⁸ Jones, *Chronology*, 56.

⁴⁸⁹ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 258-59.

⁴⁹⁰ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 259.

In the light of Numbers 32:13, which assigns 40 years to the Wandering, the conquest of the land under Joshua must have begun in 1456 B.C., or on the morrow of Thutmose III's victorious campaigns when all Canaan belonged to Egypt, and on the eve of Amenophis II's deportation of the local population.⁴⁹¹

Author's comment: This is where modern scholars use their false chronology to try to win an argument (the argument on Egyptian chronology will be dealt with in volume 2 of this series). Let us continue:

Even more astounding are the implications of the resultant placement of the Period of the Judges, namely 1456 to 1080 B.C. [That is, leaving 20 years for Saul, 40 for David (cf. 1 Kings 2:11), and 4 for Solomon]. This is almost exactly coeval with the Egyptian empire in Asia! Yet our Egyptian sources mention neither the patriarchs, Israel in Egypt, Joshua, nor his successors, while the Bible says absolutely nothing about the Egyptian empire in the land. In fact, the Biblical writers are wholly and blissfully unaware of the colossal discrepancy to which their "history" and "chronology" have given rise.⁴⁹²

Author's comment: The reason there is no mention of the Patriarchs during this period should have alerted modern scholars that something was way out of whack with Egyptian chronology — not the Bible's. One would think that it would have dawned on modern-day scholars as to the real reason why there is such a discrepancy between Egyptian sources and the Bible. It is not the Bible that is in chronological disarray — it is modern theories to the contrary. Emphatically, Biblical chronology is the basis for the chronology of other ancient nations — *not the other way around!*

The falsehood of today's modern construct of ancient Egyptian chronology was thoroughly indicted at the close of World War II, but modern scholars refused to believe their eyes and rejected the *overwhelming* evidence that Immanuel Velikovsky produced!⁴⁹³ Velikovsky's thesis was condemned not because it was flawed or inaccurate; but because it finally overthrew the anti-Biblical chronology invented by modern secular scholarship.

Scholars have tried their best to overthrow the views of Immanuel Velikovsky, like some pesky gnat that continually buzzes about their faces. But the brilliant theses of Velikovsky would have come forth eventually, if not by him, then by others who could see through the mirage of today's bogus reconstructed history of ancient Egypt and Assyria.

Velikovsky was most certainly right in identifying the fact that the Hyksos period was brought on by the Exodus event; that time period exactly paralleled the time of the Judges in the Biblical narrative. His genius forced the rest of Egyptian chronology to be corrected accordingly. And when that was done, a whole host of Biblical parallels came into focus as never before.⁴⁹⁴

The reason why Velikovsky's theories have not gone away is not due to an appeal "to those lazy enough to feel comfortable with ignoring evidence in disciplines they cannot control."⁴⁹⁵ Statements like these cannot distract us in our pursuit of Biblical and historical facts. It is high time that such braggadocio be confronted with facts, real insight, and inspirational analysis that transcends the bias and prejudice that is based on nothing more than a fit of predisposed anger against the Biblical record in general.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹² *Ibid.*

⁴⁹³ Immanuel Velikovsky, "Theses for the Reconstruction of Ancient History," *Scripta Universitatis Atque Bibliothecae Hierosolymitanarum*, [Scientific Report III] (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1945).

The Patriarchal Period

Biblical Chronology of the Patriarchal World

We now must move forward and put aside the ridiculous interpretations of modern scholars concerning their nonsensical reconstruction of ancient history. The main goal of this book is to restore Biblical chronology, as well as the chronology of the ancient world. Once that is done, then we can finally come to a true understanding of ancient world history.

The Biblical chronology from the Flood to the Exodus event can now be dated from the following Biblical references based upon the reconstruction that we have already established up to now. These dates will provide the foundation for the historical events, not only within the Bible, but especially Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Mediterranean world, indeed, all post Flood civilizations as well. The significant dates are as follows:⁴⁹⁶

Chronology of the Patriarchal Age

Table 15:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Reference |
|-------------|------------|---|----------------|
| 2315 | 1656 | Flood commences, Noah age 600 | Gen 7:6, 11 |
| 2315 | 1656 | Methuselah died, age 969 | Gen 7:4 |
| 2314 | 1657 | Flood ends; Rainbow Covenant, Noah age 601 | Gen 8:13; 9:16 |
| 2313 | 1658 | Arphaxad born 2 years after Flood, Shem age 100 | Gen 11:10 |
| 2278 | 1693 | Selah born, Arphaxad age 35 | Gen 11:12 |
| 2248 | 1723 | Eber born, Selah age 30 | Gen 11:14 |
| 2214 | 1757 | Peleg born, Eber age 34 | Gen 11:16 |

⁴⁹⁴ It would appear that Redford resisted the very mention of the name of “Velikovsky” in his 488-page book: *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*; but alas, near the end of this book, true to form, he could not resist the temptation to finally, on page 421, fire off this dismissive repudiation of Velikovsky’s masterful thesis: “[the] shortcoming is seen to best advantage in the works of Velikowsky [*sic!*]. Although the astronomical parts of his work I cannot deal with, I know that when he must handle Egyptian evidence he commits the most egregious and laughable errors. Although it would be a waste of space to list them here [author: NO, it would not!], I will be happy to oblige any reader with more details (Redford, *Ancient Times*, 421).” Although this footnote appears to be like some sort of side comment, it is not. The present author is convinced that this statement is the main reason why Redford even wrote his book. And here is another curious observation: it is noteworthy that Redford does not include Velikovsky in his index, and he has misspelled his name twice (“Velikowsky” instead of “Velikovsky”); gives his first initial of his name as “E” (apparently for “Emanuel” instead of “I” for Immanuel). Of course, this could all be just innocent oversights in the same vein as he misspelled Roland de Vaux’s last name as “Vauz” (195, n. 5), or H. H. Rowley as J. J. Rowley (260, n. 11). But one has to admit that it looks bad and certainly smacks of the kind of subtle disrespect that one would expect from those who hold the Velikovskian hypotheses in such utter disdain.

⁴⁹⁵ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 421.

⁴⁹⁶ Biblical references will be given for dates derived from the Bible. Speculative dates are entered in parentheses or dates based on other sources, such as the *Book of Jubilees*, the *Book of Jasher*, or the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (taken from Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968]), and Demetrius the Chronographer (cited in Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel*, tr. Edwin Hamilton Gifford [Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981], 1:457).

Table 15:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Reference |
|-------------------|------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 2214 | 1757 | Earth Divided in the days of Peleg | Gen 10:25 |
| 2214 | 1757 | Tower of Babel event begins recorded history with the rebellion of Cush and his son Nimrod | Gen 10:10; 11:1-9 |
| 2184 | 1787 | Reu born, Peleg age 30 | Gen 11:18 |
| 2152 | 1819 | Serug born, Reu age 32 | Gen 11:20 |
| 2122 | 1849 | Nahor I born, Serug age 30 | Gen 11:22 |
| 2093 | 1878 | Terach born, Nahor I age 29 | Gen 11:24 |
| 2055 | 1916 | <i>Terach age 38 when Haran (and Nahor?) born</i> | Jasher 7:22 |
| 2024 | 1947 | <i>Lot born, a year before Abram</i> | Jasher 9:2 |
| 2023 ^a | 1948 | Abram born, Terach age 70 | Gen 11:26 |
| 2013 | 1958 | Sorai born; Abram, age 10, goes to study under Noah and Shem | Gen 17:17 |
| 1975 | 1996 | Peleg died, age 239 | Gen 11:19 |
| 1974 | 1997 | Nahor I, son of Serug, father of Terach, died at age 148, in Abram's 49 th year | Gen 11:24-25 Jasher 11:12 |
| 1974 | 1997 | <i>Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, attacks the 5 cities of the plain and makes them tributary for 12 years</i> | Jasher 11:9 |
| 1973 | 1998 | <i>Abram, age 50, leaves Noah and Shem and returns to the home of his father, Terach in Ur</i> | Jasher 11:13 |
| 1971 | 2000 | <i>Abram, age 52, flees again to Noah and Shem in Haran</i> | Jasher 12:45, 61 |
| 1965 | 2006 | Death of Noah, age 950, Abram age 58 | Gen 9:28 |
| 1963 | 2008 | <i>Sodom and Gomorrah revolt against Chedorlaomer</i> | Jasher 13:11 |
| 1958 | 2013 | Chedorlaomer again attacks the cities of the plain. Amraphel, Arioch, Tidal defeated in Abram's 65 th year ^b | Gen 14:1-24 Jasher 13:12-16 |
| 1953 | 2018 | <i>The LORD appeared to Abram age 70 and he returns to his father in Haran for five years</i> | Jasher 13:17-19 |
| 1948 | 2023 | The LORD again appears to Abram, age 75, and sends him back to Canaan with Lot | Gen 12:1-4 Jasher 13:20-28 |
| 1945 | 2026 | Reu died, age 239, Abram age 78 | Gen 11:21 |

The Patriarchal Period

Table 15:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Reference |
|-------------|------------|--|-----------------|
| 1943 | 2028 | Abram's descent into Egypt | Gen 12:10-19 |
| 1938 | 2033 | Abram 10 years in Canaan | Gen 16:3 |
| 1938 | 2033 | Abram, age 85, takes Hagar as wife | Gen 16:3 |
| 1937 | 2034 | Ishmael born, Abram age 86 | Gen 16:4-16 |
| 1924 | 2047 | God's Covenant with Abram (now Abraham), age 99 | Gen 17:1-27 |
| 1924 | 2047 | Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed | Gen 19:24-25 |
| 1923 | 2048 | Covenant Confirmed, Abraham 100 | Gal 3:17 |
| 1923 | 2048 | Isaac born, Abraham age 100, Sarah age 90 | Gen 21:1-5 |
| 1922 | 2049 | Serug died, age 230 | Gen 11:22-23 |
| 1920 | 2051 | Isaac weaned | Gen 21:8-21 |
| 1918 | 2053 | <i>Ishmael attempts to kill Isaac, and Abraham casts him out with his mother, Hagar</i> | Jasher 21:13-48 |
| 1898 | 2073 | <i>Isaac offered as sacrifice, age 25, Abraham age 125^c</i> | Gen 22:1-19 |
| 1888 | 2083 | Terach died, age 205, Abraham age 135 | Gen 11:32 |
| 1886 | 2085 | Sarah died, age 127 | Gen 23:1-20 |
| 1885 | 2086 | <i>Abimelech, king of the Philistines, age 193, died and is succeeded by his 12-year-old son, Benmalich (Abimelech II)</i> | Jasher 24:19-21 |
| 1884 | 2087 | <i>Lot, son of Abraham's brother, Haran, died at age 140</i> | Jasher 24:22-26 |
| 1883 | 2088 | Isaac, age 40, marries Rebekkah, age 14 | Gen 25:20; 40 |
| 1875 | 2096 | Arphaxad died, age 438; Abraham age 148 | Gen 11:13 |
| 1873 | 2098 | Abraham, about age 150, marries Keturah | Gen 25:1-7 |
| 1863 | 2108 | Twin brothers Jacob and Esau born, Isaac age 60 | Gen 25:21-26 |
| 1848 | 2123 | Abraham died, age 175, Isaac age 75, Jacob age 15 | Gen 25:7-10 |
| 1848 | 2123 | <i>Nimrod is slain by Esau, age 215, ruled 185 years</i> | Jasher 27:16 |
| 1845 | 2126 | Shelach, grandson of Shem, died, age 433 | Gen 11:15 |
| 1845 | 2126 | <i>Isaac sends 18-year-old Jacob to the house of Shem and Eber for instruction for 32 years^d</i> | Jasher 28:18 |

Table 15:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Reference |
|-------------|------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1842 | 2129 | Isaac moved to Gerar, deceives Abimelech | Gen 26:1-11 |
| 1823 | 2148 | Esau, age 40, marries Hittites, Judith and Basemath | Gen 26:34-35 |
| 1813 | 2158 | Shem died, age 600 | Gen 11:11 |
| 1813 | 2158 | <i>Upon the death of Shem, Jacob, age 50, returns to his father Isaac in Hebron</i> | Jasher 28:25 |
| 1807 | 2164 | Jacob and Esau, ages 56, were blessed by Isaac, age 116 | Gen 27:1-40; Jasher 28:26 |
| 1800 | 2171 | Ishmael died, age 137 | Gen 25:12-28 |
| 1793 | 2178 | Jacob, age 70, serves Laban for 7 years for Rachel but is given Leah | Gen 29:20 |
| 1786 | 2185 | Jacob, age 77, serves Laban another 7 years for Rachel | Gen 29:21-26 |
| 1785 | 2186 | <i>Reuben, Jacob's first son by Leah, born^e</i> | Gen 29:32 |
| 1784 | 2187 | Eber, great-grandson of Shem, died, age 464 | Gen 11:16-17 |
| 1784 | 2187 | <i>Simeon, Jacob's second son by Leah, born^f</i> | Gen 29:33 |
| 1781 | 2190 | <i>Levi, Jacob's third son by Leah, born^g</i> | Gen 29:44 |
| 1779 | 2192 | <i>Judah, Jacob's fourth son by Leah, born^h</i> | Gen 29:35 |
| 1779 | 2192 | Dan, Jacob's fifth son by Bilhah, born | Gen 30:6 |
| 1778 | 2193 | Naphtali, Jacob's sixth son born to Bilhah | Gen 30:7-8 |
| 1778 | 2193 | Gad, Jacob's seventh son born to Zilpah | Gen 30:9-11 |
| 1777 | 2194 | Asher, Jacob's eighth son born by Zilpah | Gen 30:12-13 |
| 1776 | 2195 | Reuben and the mandrake incident | Gen 30:14-16 |
| 1775 | 2196 | Issachar, Jacob's ninth son born by Leah | Gen 30:17-18 |
| 1774 | 2197 | Zebulun, Jacob's tenth son born by Leah | Gen 30:19-20 |
| 1773 | 2198 | Dinah, Jacob's first daughter born by Leah | Gen 30:21 |
| 1773 | 2198 | Jacob returns to Canaan after 20 years' service | Gen 31:41 |
| 1772 | 2199 | Joseph born to Rachel, Jacob age 91, Isaac age 151 | Gen 30:23-24 |
| 1759 | 2212 | Judah marries a Canaanite woman, Shuah | Gen 38:1-5 |

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Table 15:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Reference |
|-------------|------------|--|--------------|
| 1758 | 2213 | Dinah's affair with Shechem | Gen 34:1-29 |
| 1757 | 2214 | Benjamin, Jacob's twelfth son born by Rachel who died giving birth | Gen 35:16-20 |
| 1757 | 2214 | Jacob moves to Hebron after birth of Benjamin | Gen 35:27-29 |
| 1755 | 2216 | Joseph, 17 years old, sold to Midianites | Gen 37:2 |
| 1753 | 2218 | Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams | Gen 41:1 |
| 1743 | 2228 | Isaac died, age 180, Jacob age 120, Joseph age 29 | Gen 35:28-29 |
| 1742 | 2229 | Joseph, age 30, promoted as Viceroy in Egypt | Gen 41:46 |
| 1742 | 2229 | Seven years of Plenty begins | Gen 41:47 |
| 1740 | 2231 | Judah's affair with Tamar | Gen 38:1-27 |
| 1739 | 2232 | <i>Esau diedⁱ</i> | |
| 1737 | 2234 | Manasseh born to Joseph | Gen 41:50-51 |
| 1736 | 2235 | Ephraim born to Joseph | Gen 41:52 |
| 1735 | 2236 | Seven years of Plenty ends/Famine begins | Gen 41:53-54 |
| 1733 | 2238 | Jacob, age 130, and family settled in the Land of Goshen in Egypt, 2 nd year of Famine ^j | Gen 47:8-9 |
| 1728 | 2243 | Seven years of Famine ends | |
| 1721 | 2250 | <i>Birth of Kohath, Levi age 60^k</i> | Gen 46:11 |
| 1716 | 2255 | Jacob blesses his sons and dies in Egypt, age 147 ^l | Gen 47:28 |
| 1686 | 2285 | <i>Amram born, Kohath age 35^m</i> | |
| 1664 | 2307 | <i>Simeon died, age 120ⁿ</i> | |
| 1662 | 2309 | Joseph died in Egypt, age 110 | Gen 50:22-26 |
| 1660 | 2311 | <i>Judah died, age 119^o</i> | |
| 1660 | 2317 | <i>Reuben died, age 125^p, 79th year of sojourn in Egypt</i> | Jasher 62:1 |
| 1653 | 2318 | <i>Dan died, age 120</i> | Jasher 62:2 |
| 1660 | 2311 | <i>Zebulon died, age 114^q</i> | |

Table 15:

| Date BCE | Date AM | Event | Reference |
|-------------|------------|---|-----------------|
| 1653 | 2318 | <i>Gad died, age 125^t</i> | |
| 1651 | 2320 | <i>Asher died, age 125^s</i> | Jasher 62:4 |
| 1648 | 2323 | <i>Naphtali died, age 130^t</i> | |
| 1644 | 2327 | <i>Levi died, age 137^u</i> | Exod 6:16 |
| 1632 | 2339 | <i>Benjamin died, age 125^v</i> | |
| 1588 | 2383 | Kohath died, age 133 ^w | Exod 6:18 |
| 1576 | 2395 | Aaron born, his father Amram was age 110 (Aaron was 83 at Exodus) | Exod 7:7 |
| 1573 | 2398 | Moses born, his father Amram was age 113 (Moses was 80 at Exodus) ^x | Exod 7:7 |
| 1550 | 2421 | <i>Amram died, age 136;^y Moses age 23</i> | Exod 6:20 |
| 1543 | 2428 | <i>Moses, age 30, “the General” of Egyptian Dynasty 13, fights Ethiopians, marries Ethiopian Princess^z</i> | |
| 1533 | 2438 | Moses, age 40, flees Egypt to Midian | Exod 2:23-25 |
| 1493 | 2478 | Exodus, 430 th year of Covenant confirmed, Moses age 80. | Exod 12:40; 7:7 |

a. An interesting phenomenon in numbers has resulted in the fact that Abram was born in what we have identified as the year of 2023 BCE or AM 1948; thereafter we read that the LORD appeared before him when he was the age of 75, viz., 1948 BCE or AM 2023. Is this significant? No, no more than this book being written in 2023 CE — a mirror image of Abraham’s birth on the AM scale. The BCE/CE time scale is totally arbitrary. Indeed, another such curious play on numbers is the fact that Abram, being born in the year of AM 1948, just so happens to be the same numerical figure as the birth of the modern nation of Israel, which occurred in 1948 CE. Or, it could be said that Archbishop Ussher died in the year 1656 CE, the exact same number of years from Adam until the Flood. This kind of numerology is indeed curious, but nothing more.

b. In volume 2 it will be shown that Arioch, king of Ellasar (Asar or Ashur) was the Arius of the Assyrian king list whose 30-year reign just so happened to end in the year of 1958 BCE, the exact same year that the 30-year reign of Ur-lugal (Amraphel) of Uruk I ended his reign at the Battle of Kittim. It is synchronisms like this that continually reassure us in the confidence of the chronology established herein.

c. Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.13.2 [§227] (Whiston, 43).

d. “For three years Isaac [1943-1743 BCE] had mourned for his mother, and he could find no consolation in the academy of Shem [2413-1813 BCE] and Eber [2248-1784 BCE], his abiding place during that period. But Rebecca comforted him after his mother’s death, for she was the counterpart of Sarah in person and in spirit” (Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews* [Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909-1938], 1:297).

e. Testament of Reuben, 1:1-3 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 296). Levi lived 125 years and died two years after his brother Joseph. Since Joseph died in 1662 BCE, Levi, therefore, died in 1660 BCE and was born 125 years before in the year of 1785 BCE. This agrees with Jubilees 28:11, 24 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 56).

f. Testament of Simeon, 1:1-2 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 300).

The Patriarchal Period

g. Testament of Levi, 12:7 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 311): “In my hundred and eighteenth year Joseph died.” Joseph died in 1662 BCE. Hence, Levi was born in 1880 BCE. However, Levi stated that he was 48 when he went to Egypt with his father (*ibid.*), which would place his birth in 1881 BCE. Alexander Polyhistor (1st century BCE), quoting Demetrius the Chronographer (3rd century BCE), produced a different chronology for the family of Levi that is reproduced here for reference only (since we are in a time period that the Bible does not give us any firm dates): “But Jacob came from Charran to Laban, when he was eighty years old, and begat Levi, and Levi was afterward seventeen years in Egypt from the time of his coming from Canaan into Egypt, so same year in which “Clath” (*sic.*, Kohath) was born Jacob died in Egypt after he had blessed the sons of Joseph, being himself one hundred and forty-seven years old and leaving Joseph fifty-six years old. And Levi was a hundred and thirty-seven years old when he died; And when Clath (Kohath) was forty years old he begat Amram, who was fourteen years old when Joseph died in Egypt being a hundred and ten years old: and Clath (Kohath) was a hundred and thirty-three years old when he died Amram took to wife his uncle’s daughter Jochabet, and when he was seventy-five years old begat Aaron and Moses; but when he begat Moses Amram was seventy-eight years old, and Amram was hundred and thirty-six years old when he died” (quoted from Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel*, 1:457).

h. Testament of Judah 12:12 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 319) says that Judah was 46 years old when he came to Egypt and was in Egypt for a period of 73 years. Jacob and his family came to Egypt in 1733 BCE, 46 years earlier means that Judah was born in the year of 1779 BCE and lived there until the age of 119.

i. Testament of Judah, 9:1-4 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 318). Judah was age 40 at the time of Esau’s death according to this source. However, this conflicts with the story that Esau died in battle trying to prevent the sons of Jacob from burying their father (*Jasher* 56:64).

j. Jacob came to Egypt in 1733 BCE, 240 years before the Exodus in 1493 BCE when Joseph was 39. However, the actual time of slavery did not happen while Joseph was alive, but by a pharaoh who knew not Joseph (Exod 1:8). Joseph died at the age of 110 (Gen 50:22-26), 71 years after his father came to Egypt in 1662 BCE. Thus, the Israelites were in servitude for no more than 169 years (240 - 71 = 169). The king who knew not Joseph was Pepi II (1588-1494 BCE) of Dynasty 6, born 74 years after Joseph’s death. Thus, the servitude began around the time of the birth of Moses in 1573 BCE.

k. Testament of Levi, 11:5 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 316).

l. Jacob’s life appears to have had significant events occur in multiples of seven years. He was blessed by Isaac at about age 56 (7 x 8). His uncle Ishmael died when he was 63 (7 x 9). Jacob began to serve Laban for seven years at age 70 (7 x 10). He began to serve Laban a second period of seven years at age 77 (7 x 11). Judah and Dan were born when he was age 84 (7 x 12). Jacob gave birth to his son Joseph when he was 91 (7 x 13). Jacob died at age 147 (7 x 7 x 3).

m. Testament of Levi, 11:5 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 316).

n. Testament of Simeon, 1:1-2 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 300).

o. Testament of Judah, 12:12 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 319).

p. Testament of Reuben, 1:1-3 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 296).

q. Testament of Zebulon 1:1 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 328).

r. Testament of Gad, 1:1 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 339).

s. Testament of Asher, 1:1 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 342).

t. Testament of Naphtali, 1:1 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, 335).

u. Demetrius, *op. cit.*, note e.

v. Demetrius, *op. cit.*, note e.

w. Demetrius, *op. cit.*, note e.

x. 1573 BCE is now finally secured for the birth of Moses and the birth of Abraham in the year of 2023 BCE. The *Seder Olam*, 3:1 “Covenant and Slavery” (Guggenheimer, 37) counted 400 years from the birth of Isaac to the Exodus — not the correct value of 430 years. And since Isaac was born in Abraham’s 100th year (2023-100 = 1923 BCE, AM 2048) and the Exodus occurred in Moses’ 80th year (1573 - 80 = 1493 BCE, AM 2478) the actual difference is once again proven to be 430 years. This 30 year short fall proves once and for all the first egregious error of the *Seder Olam* chronology.

y. Demetrius, *op. cit.*, note e.

z. Josephus, *Ant.*, 2.10.1 [§§238-53] (Whiston, 68).

The chronology of the Patriarchal period has now been firmly established. It is not necessary for us to spend more time here with detailed accounts of the internal events that occurred during this age. I leave that to others to build upon this new overall structure. However, what is important is to know that with this chronology it is now possible to date the events of parallel nations in accordance with this securely determined chronology of the Bible. This will be done in subsequent volumes.

CHAPTER 6

HISTORY BEGINS AT BABEL!

*T*HE BUILDING OF THE TOWER OF BABEL BEGINS WRITTEN HISTORY AS WE KNOW IT. In order for us to understand its true significance, we must place it in the backdrop of the overall story of the events which preceded it. The pre-Flood world, having been condemned for its violent rebellion to the authority of God, nevertheless brought into the new post-Flood world the same seeds of rebellion right within the very family of Noah.

The rejection of the authority of Noah and his son, Shem, was promoted by Noah's son Ham, his grandson, Cush, and his great-grandson, Nimrod. The struggle for right versus wrong became the basis for what has been the strife of human existence ever since the ultimate defiance against the government of God here on earth administered by Noah and his son, Shem.

Ancient history cannot be understood without a thorough understanding of the internal events against this backdrop. The compelling narrative relates the story in the following manner:

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, **let us make bricks**, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, **let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens**, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." The LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. And the LORD said, "Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech." So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore **it was called Babel**, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth (Gen 11:1-9, emphasis the author's).

The ancient Akkadian Creation Epic, tablet six, closely follows this Biblical chronicle:

History Begins at Babel!

To the Anunnaki of heaven and earth had allotted their portions. The Anunnaki opened their mouths and said to Marduk, their lord: "Now, O lord, thou who hast caused our deliverance, What shall be our homage to thee? Let us build a shrine ... When Marduk heard this, brightly glowed his features, like the day: "Construct Babylon, whose building you have requested. Let its brickwork be fashioned. You shall name it "The Sanctuary." ... **For one whole year they molded the bricks. When the second year arrived, They raised high the head of Esagila equaling Apsu. Having built a stage TOWER as high as Apsu.** They set up in it an abode for Marduk, Enlil, (and) Ea. ... "This is **Babylon**, the place that is your home." ... Most exalted be the Son, our avenger; Let his sovereignty be surpassing, having no rival. May he shepherd the black-headed ones [the human race] (emphasis the author's).⁴⁹⁷

This ancient archaeological record parallels the Biblical record in such an unbelievable way that it provides us with a firm foundation for the accuracy of the Biblical account.⁴⁹⁸ Both accounts preserve the fact that there was a prodigious building enterprise of a great sanctuary with a huge tower of enormous height. And in both cases, the city in question is notably called "Babylon." This account states that the venture went on for a period of two years. The astonishing corroboration of the Bible and the evidence of archaeology is an amazing testimony that both are in complete agreement. History comes alive only when it is paralleled with the Bible!

The most exalted "son" of the Babylonian account can be none other than Nimrod himself of the Biblical evidence. His father was Cush, son of Ham, son of Noah. Nimrod was credited as being the founder of Babylon:

Cush became the father of Nimrod; he was the first on earth to become a mighty warrior. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." **The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad,** all of them in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria, and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city (Gen 10:9-12, emphasis the author's).

These cities are real places that have been confirmed by archaeology.⁴⁹⁹ Nimrod was the first post-Flood luminary to become, as the Bible describes him, the first "mighty warrior." And what did Nimrod "war" against? We should realize that Noah had no intention of presiding over a resurrected post-Flood world of Cain. Yet, it would appear that the family of Ham longed for a return of that society and liberty of those nostalgic times. Alexander Hislop informs us:

All tradition from the earliest times bears testimony to the apostasy of Nimrod, and to his success in leading men away from the patriarchal faith, and delivering their minds from that awe of God and fear of the judgments of heaven that must have rested on them while yet the memory of the flood was recent.⁵⁰⁰

John Williams, a well-known early missionary to the South Seas, recorded a Polynesian myth that would seem to reflect the sentiments of Nimrod after the Flood:

Another tradition stated that the heavens were originally so close to the earth that men could not walk, but were compelled to crawl. This was a very serious evil; but, at length, an individual conceived the sublime idea of elevating the heavens to a more convenient height. For this purpose, he put forth his utmost energy. ... Now

⁴⁹⁷ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 68-69 (emphasis the author's).

⁴⁹⁸ Of course, secular scholars will tell you that it was the Biblical writers that relied on the traditions from the Sumerian legends. But either way, one must concede that these accounts agree with each other in a strikingly uniform manner.

⁴⁹⁹ However, Rehoboth-ir (Gen 10:10-11) has not been identified by archaeology as of yet, as well as Resen (Gen 10:10-11.).

⁵⁰⁰ Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons* (Neptune, N. J.: Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., 1916), 52.

this individual was deified; and, up to the moment that Christianity was embraced, the deluded inhabitants worshiped him as “the Elevator of the heavens.”⁵⁰¹

Indeed, this is exactly what the Scriptures tell us that the people said

Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens ...” (Gen 11:4).

From this, we can see that it was obvious that Nimrod desired to raise the heavens to a more convenient height by building a tower that pushed against the heavens. Thus, men could now walk tall and upright, and no longer would have to crawl on the ground, due to the repressive regime of Noah and Shem. Notwithstanding, that enterprise was never to be realized. As a result of Nimrod’s rebellion, we have the confounding of languages and the scattering of the first families of Noah’s generation around the globe.

The classical historians preserved the fact that the history of the ancient nations of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Greece, indeed, even China, all began around the year of 2200 BCE, and not thousands of years prior to this, as modern historians would have us believe.

As noted previously, Simplicius, a Latin writer in the sixth century CE, recorded that when Alexander (the Great) defeated Darius III of Persia at Gaugamela, he immediately went to the ancient city of Babylon. While there he received the accumulated astronomical observations of the Babylonian astrologers stretching back 1903 years. Since the Battle of Gaugamela occurred in 331 BCE, 1903 years earlier places this occurrence in the year of 2234 BCE, 18 years before the Tower of Babel event in 2216 BCE. In other words, the overall Biblical model is sustained by such dates.

The Byzantine chronicler Constantius Manasses (d. 1187 CE) calculated that the Egyptian Empire lasted 1663 years. Egypt collapsed when Cambyses II, king of Persia, defeated pharaoh Psamstik II in 525 BCE.⁵⁰² That would place the beginning of Egypt in 2188 BCE, some 26 years after the Babel debacle, by this ancient historian.⁵⁰³

All of these dates bring us squarely within the Biblical chronological framework of the post-Flood world. This is when Classical historians place ancient history, exactly where the Bible places history. The chronologies of modern scholars are the Johnny-come-lately’s that have turned ancient history upside down and on its head for no other reason than their German rationalization of evolutionary thought. That rationalization stands self-condemned! Indeed, the Bible not only agrees with classical history, but history itself makes no sense unless you bring together the testimony of both the Bible, classical history, and the archaeological evidence as witnesses to the truth.

The Origin of Nations

One of the most amazing chapters in the entire Bible is chapter 10 of Genesis. After the Flood people began to congregate in major cities in Mesopotamia. They pooled their knowledge and designed to build a great “skyscraper” as it were, extending as high as they could build it. And they became a great melting pot of racial identities. One could almost say that the situation reflects the same conditions as we live in today, especially within the United States.

⁵⁰¹ John Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* (London: J. Snow, 1837), 544.

⁵⁰² Herodotus, *The Histories*, 3:11-12.

⁵⁰³ Ussher, *Annals*, 22.

History Begins at Babel!

Knowledge today has increased to the point that great technology has arisen by the pooling of our combined great intellects. Also, the United States is a great racial melting pot. Language barriers have been dissolved. Communication is universal. World travel is easy and natural.

A century after the Flood a similar situation was described as follows:

The LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. And the LORD said, "Look they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do, **nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them**. Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore it was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth (Gen 11:5-9) (emphasis the author's).

When it says that nothing that the people of that time should propose would be impossible, it means that given a few more years they would begin to achieve the very advancements that rival those of today. But the timing was all wrong. It was intended that six thousand years should transpire of humankind going its own way in order to experience the result of the governments of Man versus the Kingdom of God on earth. It was only to be near the end of that period that it was intended that people would experience mass travel and there would be a knowledge explosion (Dan 12:4). Therefore, the families of Noah were to be scattered all around the globe at that time and develop into distinguishable nations. And their ethnic identity would be separated by a speech barrier that would keep their tribes together, and others out.

It is apparent that the family of Shem, father of the Semites, was racially white. This would indicate that Noah and his three sons were also "white." This would further indicate that any other racial characteristics that were carried through the Flood were carried through by the genetic makeup of the wives of Noah's. This evidences the fact that even Noah's sons had racially inter-married into non-white stock. Specifically, Ham's descendants migrated to Africa where the racial characteristic was "black;" Japheth's descendants (not all) migrated to the Far East, where we find the so-called "yellow" race. Other sub-racial types apparently developed after the Flood.

A non-politically correct assessment of these facts indicates that God originally intended that racial segregation was necessary for the development of the diversity of mankind's individual dynamics. That this assessment is correct can only be reinforced by what Moses stated:

Remember the days of old, consider the years long past; ask your father, and he will inform you, your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High apportioned the nations when he divided [*segregated!*] humankind, he fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the Israelites; the LORD's own portion was his people, Jacob his allotted share (Deut 32:7-9).

The insightful remarks of the Apostle Paul also helps our understanding in this matter:

The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is LORD of heaven and earth ... From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of the existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live (Acts 17:24, 26-27).

Genesis 10 gives the names of the heads of families that became the founders of many of the nations of the ancient world. This chapter has become known as "The Table of Nations." Genesis 10 is an overall statement of the dispersion of the first families of Noah, who scattered them around the entire globe. The immediate families of Noah's sons and grandsons were family patri-

archs who established their own kingdoms in their allotted areas. They typically left their stamp and name on the countries that they founded. Therefore, this helps us to identify their legacy and progeny as well as their geographical location around the world. No other ancient document disseminates such a revealing insight into the origin of ancient cultures.

Nations are merely families grown big. In some cases, Genesis 10 carries the descendants of these families down to the seventh generation of Noah. Genesis 10 begins and ends with the following profound statements:

These are the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth; children [who] were born to them after the flood. ... These are the families of Noah's sons, according to their genealogies, in their nations; and from these [the sons of Noah] the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood (Gen 10:1, 32).

Notice the significant statement that the nations were "spread abroad on the earth after the flood." It will be shown as we move along that it was Noah and Shem who were directly responsible for this "spread" of "nations" around the world.

From these three sons of Noah (and their wives) sprang all the nations and races of today. Genesis 10 gives us the leading names of Noah's family. Some of these names are easily identifiable among the ancient peoples, others not so much.

The event at Babel is known as the time of the "great division." It is this important event that we must correctly understand as the true beginning of history as we know it. Indeed, history does in fact begin at Babel.

The Year of the Division

The dispersion at Babel occurred a century after the Flood. The Flood ended in the year of 2314 BCE. One hundred years thereafter brings us to the year of 2214 BCE. What happened in that year? It was the birth of Peleg. Why should we consider that date important?

We can also only approximate the period of time it would have taken for the events following the Flood to have taken place, although a synchronism may be found in the record of the Tower of Babel. When Noah emerged from the Ark after the Flood subsided, "God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth'" (Genesis 9:1). The blessing seemed to work very well because Peleg was born only 100 years after the Flood, and "in his days the earth was divided" (Genesis 10:25). His name is actually the Hebrew word for "divide" and may refer to the splitting up into tribes of the men who built the Tower of Babel.⁵⁰⁴

Obviously, if Peleg bore the name "Division" he must have been born during that time, otherwise, if the "Division" occurred before his birth, then it did not occur during his lifetime. And if the "Division" occurred after Peleg's birth, then why would he be named "Division" after that event had already passed? Thus, we have an exact date for the "Division" of the human race that occurred when the Tower of Babel enterprise was thwarted. That date is 2214 BCE. It therefore must represent the starting point in world history that ancient governments began to reckon their own history.

It is now time to move on and establish the chronology of the period of the Judges.

⁵⁰⁴ John Aston and David Down, *Unwrapping the Pharaohs: How Egyptian Archaeology Confirms the Biblical Timeline* (Green Forrest, Ark.: Master Books, 2007), 200.



CHAPTER 7

THE JUDGES PERIOD

*T*HE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES SPANS FROM THE TIME OF THE EXODUS OF THE ISRAELITES from Egypt under Moses to the time when Israel was ruled by kings, viz., Saul, David, Solomon, and thereafter the so-called Divided Kingdom. It is important that we understand the chronology of this period in order to confirm that the Biblical numbers are indeed consistent and reliable. Nevertheless, this period seems to be the most mysterious period of the Bible in terms of Biblical chronology.

The Post Exodus Era was a Dark Age

After the Exodus, the period of the Judges is what we should call a “Dark Age” in Canaan as well as in Egypt. This is because that after the Exodus Egypt was basically totally destroyed as a nation and lay prostrate to invading powers that took advantage of Egypt’s demise.⁵⁰⁵ Yet, modern scholars spin a fantastical fairy tale that this period was at the zenith of Egypt’s wealth and power — indeed, a veritable Golden Age in Egyptian history. What utter nonsense! The Golden Age of Egypt didn’t occur until the Golden Age of Israel during the times of King David and King Solomon of Israel.

Modern scholars have turned the tables on the Biblical narrative and secular evidence as somehow promoting their version of ancient history. Nevertheless, we need to understand that after the Exodus in Egyptian history, it became the so-called Hyksos period — the invaders of Egypt that made Egypt a time of a total “Dark Age.” It was certainly not the time of the glorious 18th or 19th dynasties of Egypt. The splendid time of the 18th dynasty was indeed coeval with King David and King Solomon. The Shishak of the Bible was in fact Thutmose III, who plundered the vast wealth of the Holy Temple in 972 BCE.⁵⁰⁶ That is the primary reason why the 18th and 19th dynasties

⁵⁰⁵ There is sufficient Biblical and secular evidence to absolutely establish this fact. It is incumbent that new students of ancient history evaluate the powerful evidence presented in Immanuel Velikovsky, *Ages in Chaos: From the Exodus to King Akhnaton* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1952).

became so rich. But during the period after the Exodus, Egypt fell into a dark period and became slaves during the time of the Hyksos. This is a time that modern scholars cannot explain as to why this happened to glorious Egypt. Scholars, open up your eyes! This was the post-Exodus period when the Amalekites (Hyksos) took over Egypt after the Exodus — and at no other time!

The Mysterious Judges Period

The chronology of the period of Judges in ancient Israel has been misunderstood from time immemorial. On the one hand, we have a direct statement in 1 Kings 6:1 that the time from the Exodus to the fourth year of King Solomon consisted of 480 years. But if one adds up all of the Judgeships, the Captivities, and the reigns of king Saul and David until Solomon's fourth, the total is over five and a half centuries. So, how is this problem to be reconciled? The solutions that scholars have advanced range from Scripture corruption to sheer theoretical guesswork.

A further complication occurs in the fact that the New Testament Apostle Paul stated that just adding up the individual Judgeships and Captivities alone spanned a period of 450 years (Acts 13:17-21). Obviously, either something is wrong with these numbers, or some of the Judgeships were contemporaneous. An investigation into the problem reveals that the latter portraiture is the correct answer.⁵⁰⁷ But how do we correctly understand contemporary Judgeships? That is the question that has eluded just about everyone from time immemorial.

Nevertheless, with this said, the problem of the Judge's chronology is not as difficult as it has been made out to be. It is interesting that the noted scholar, Jack Finegan, who wrote the classic *Handbook of Biblical Chronology*, surprisingly never even addressed the chronology of the Judges period.⁵⁰⁸ Another published author on Biblical chronology, Walter R. Dolan, simply threw up his hands in frustration and said:

Judges: Some time periods in the book of Judges overlap each other; there is no method to date the periods of Judges at the present time.⁵⁰⁹

Really? Then again another noted Biblical chronologist, Floyd Nolan Jones,⁵¹⁰ in a very laborious discussion of the problem, also deduced that some of the Judges held office contemporaneously. Well, no big revelation in that acknowledgment, but in the end, he too failed to adequately resolve the chronology of the Judges period.

Of course, the period of the Judges is not essential for the overall chronology of the Old Testament, because we already have a direct link from the year of the Exodus to the fourth year of King Solomon as being 480 years (1 Kgs 6:1). Nevertheless, besides being an intriguing period and a challenging intellectual exercise, it is important to have the correct dating for the demarcations of the archaeology of the Judges period in respect to the Hyksos dynasties in Egypt.

⁵⁰⁶ The facts of these assertions will be given in the next volume of this series.

⁵⁰⁷ See also Jones, *Chronology*, 71-94.

⁵⁰⁸ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998). Ironically, we would expect that this noted chronologist would have included in his index the names of important Judges such as Joshua, Caleb, Samson, Samuel, *etc.*, but, alas, no mention of them.

⁵⁰⁹ Dolan, *Chronology*, 231.

⁵¹⁰ Jones, *Chronology*, 71-94.

The Judges Period

Filling in the Known Dates

Okay, so here is the strategy to resolve the chronology of the Judges period. If one works from the known dates, several keys help us fill in the remaining dates. The first step is to work forward from the Exodus as far as we can. Next, we work backward from King Solomon's reign also as far as we can in that direction. In that way, we can at least have a bracket of years to which we must place the entire period of the Judges. And in so doing we can see that there must have been parallel Judges in different regions of Israel. That is the first step that any Biblical chronologist must take into consideration.

First of all, we have established that the Exodus occurred in the year of 1493 BCE. Then the Israelites wandered for another 40 years in the desert. This brings us down to the year of 1453 BCE. It is in this year that two important things happened. The death of Moses and the Israelites the crossing over the Jordan River into Canaan.

Now, back in the second year after the Exodus (1491 BCE) Caleb and Joshua were sent out to "spy the land" (Num 9:1; 14:6). Next, we read that Caleb informs us that when he went out to "spy the land" with Joshua he was 40 years of age:

I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh-Barnea to spy out the land; and I brought him an honest report (Josh 14:7).

This means that if Caleb was 40 years of age in 1491 BCE, then he was born in 1531 BCE. Next we read that it was when Caleb was 85 years old that the Israelites divided up the land:

And now, as you see, the Lord has kept me alive, as he said, these **forty-five years** since the time that the Lord spoke this word to Moses, while Israel was journeying through the wilderness; and here I am today, **eighty-five years** old (Josh 14:10, emphasis the author's).

So, this brings us to the year of 1446 BCE, the year when the Land of Canaan was divided up among the twelve tribes of Israel. This means that it took a period of seven years for the Israelites to conquer Canaan and divide the land among the twelve tribes (1453 - 1446 = 7).

Concerning Joshua, however, the Bible only tells us that he lived until the age of 110 (Josh 24:29), but does not tell us when he died; so, this is seemingly a dead end. However, if we can accept the tradition of Josephus, then Joshua died 25 years after Moses:

So **Joshua** when he had thus discoursed to them, died, **having lived a hundred and ten years**; forty of which he lived with Moses, in order to learn what might be for his advantage afterwards. He also became their commander after his death for **twenty five years**.⁵¹¹

Moses died in the year of 1453 BCE. Josephus here reported that Joshua died 25 years after the death of Moses. Therefore, Joshua died in the year of 1428 BCE. This would place the birth of Joshua in the year of 1538 BCE. This means that Joshua lived after the dividing of the Land in 1446 BCE another 18 years before his death. This further means that the period of Judges actually had to begin sometime after this date. So, 1428 BCE is the limit that we can go in this direction.

Coming from the other direction, David, Solomon, and Saul, each reigned 40 years, a total of 120 years. Since Solomon died in 977 BCE, then Saul began to reign 120 years earlier in 1097 BCE. And that is as far as we can go in that direction. The difference, therefore, between these two dates

⁵¹¹ Josephus, *Ant.*, 5:1:29 [§117] (Whiston, 135, emphasis the author's).

is 331 years ($1428 - 1097 = 331$). This span of time is obviously 119 years short of the 450 years that the Apostle Paul allotted for the entire period of the Judges (Acts 13:17-21). Nevertheless, these numbers are the known boundaries that the Judges period must have occurred within. Therefore, the 450 years mentioned by the Apostle Paul must be understood as the sum total of individual years — not as a consecutive chronological figure.

The next clue to resolving the problem is to understand the significance of the important time period mentioned by Judge Jephthah.

The 300 Years of Jephthah

In an official diplomatic parley between Jephthah and the king of Ammon, Jephthah mentioned the fact that in the 300 years since the Israelites conquered the land of Canaan, the Ammonites never once attempted to take back their conquered lands.

Jephthah, interestingly enough, is quite able to inform the king of Ammon the exact circumstances under which the Israelites entered into the Canaanite territory:

Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites and said, “What is there between you and me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?” The king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah, “Because Israel, on coming from Egypt, took away my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore restore it peaceably” (Judg 11:12-13).

Jephthah then reminded the king of the Ammonites that since at that time it was the king of the Amorites who took up arms against Israel, and that it was

the LORD, the God of Israel, [who] gave Sihon and all his people into the hands of Israel, and they defeated them. ...So now the LORD, the God of Israel, has conquered the Amorites for the benefit of his people Israel. Do you intend to take their place? Should you not possess what your god Chemosh gives you to possess? And should we not be the ones to possess everything that the LORD our God has conquered for our benefit? Now are you any better than King Balak son of Zippor of Moab? Did he ever enter into conflict with Israel, or did he ever go to war with them? While Israel lived in Hesbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the towns that are along the Arnon, **three hundred years**, why did you not recover them with that then”? (Judg 11:21-24, emphasis the author’s).

So, by taking this 300 years as not some round number but an actual period of time, we now have another fixed date. Three hundred years from the entry into Canaan in 1453 BCE brings us down to 1153 BCE — the year of Jephthah’s messages to the king of the Ammonites. So, how does this play into the chronological information given to us in the *Book of Judges*? Let’s see.

The Ammonites oppressed Israel for 18 years (Judg 10:8). The question to ask at this juncture is whether Jephthah’s communication occurred at the beginning of this oppression, in which it would have taken him another 18 years to drive out the Ammonites, or did it come at the end of this oppression?

Although it might seem that these talks occurred at the beginning of the oppression (Judg 11:4), it must be understood that Jephthah was a Judge for only six years. It wouldn’t make any sense that Jephthah was a Judge for six years during the Oppression, then died, leaving another twelve years of Ammonite domination. Obviously, Jephthah drove out the Ammonites at the end of the 18-year period of their dominance. And the context supports this conclusion. Judges 11:29-33 tells us that Jephthah went to battle against the Ammonites and subdued them before the people of Israel.

The Judges Period

This allows us to establish the fact that the Ammonites oppressed Israel the previous 18 years before this great battle, a period from 1171 to 1153 BCE. Then we have the six years of Jephthah's judgeship from 1153 to 1147 BCE. This is an important piece of evidence in establishing the Judgeships of the Israelites during this time. Now we need to understand another very important principle that few have correctly understood.

Understanding the Jurisdictions of Israel

We have now established the fact that the Ammonite Oppression began in the year of 1171 BCE. What was it that happened that year that allowed the invasion to begin then? What was the political situation on the West side of the Jordan which emboldened the Ammonites to advance a thrust into Israelite territory? It was the leadership vacuum caused by the passing of the strong and peaceful Judgeship of Gideon and the deteriorating political situation under his pretentious son, Abimelech.

The chronology of the Judges period can best be understood when we begin to appreciate the jurisdictions of the later Judges. First, notice that upon the death of Gideon recorded in Judges 8:32, all of Israel was still geographically united. However, when Gideon passed from the scene, Israel became divided into regions consisting of the northern territory, the eastern territory, and the area containing the southern districts.

From this point on it is sometimes difficult to sort out which district is being discussed because we are dealing with parallel narratives of contemporaneous events. Nevertheless, keeping in mind these districts will help us sort out the different Judgeships.

Gideon died in 1171 BCE after a Judgeship of 40 years, viz., 1211-1171 BCE. What was it that brought on the Ammonite invasion? Notice Judges, the eighth chapter:

Then Gideon son of Joash died at the good old age, and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash at Ophrah of the Abeizrites. As soon as Gideon died, the Israelites relapsed and prostituted themselves with the Baals, making Baal-bertha their god. The Israelites did not remember the LORD their God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies on every side; and they did not exhibit loyalty to the house of Grubbily (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel (Judg 8:32-35).

Gideon's death is pivotal in resolving the period of the Judges because as soon as Gideon died Israel relapsed into a great apostasy, turning to Baal worship throughout the land. This vital piece of information is precisely what is needed in order to straighten out the three jurisdictions in the Judges period. How? Because this is the very same apostasy that we read of in two other accounts. It only makes sense that if there were three parallel jurisdictions, then it became necessary that the events of those three jurisdictions were given at three different times in the narrative. And with this common apostasy, we thus have a mutual starting point to count from for those jurisdictions.

Indeed, it seems clear that when Gideon died, and the people lapsed back into pagan worship mentioned in Judges 8:32-33, that this is the very same rebellion that we see recorded in Judges 10:6 and once again in Judges 13:1. Here is the vital key that everyone misses. All three of these accounts are describing the very same rebellion of Israel. But the consequences of this rebellion were different depending upon the geographical area mentioned in the context of those verses.

In fact, the Bible is noticeably clear that the Philistine and Ammonite invasions are recorded as occurring at the very same time:

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, worshiping the Baals and the Astartes, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines. Thus they abandoned the LORD, and did not worship him. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the **Philistines** and into the hands of the **Ammonites**, and they crushed and oppressed the Israelites that year. For **eighteen years** they oppressed all the Israelites that were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was greatly distressed (Judg 10:6-9, emphasis the author's).

Since the Ammonite invasion occurred in 1171 BCE upon the death of Gideon, then the Philistine invasion occurred that very same year in the South — the time of the great apostasy during the Judges Period.

How long did the Philistine invasion last? Notice Judges the thirteenth chapter:

The Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines forty years (Judg 13:1).

Thus, the Philistine invasion lasted 40 years from 1171-1131 BCE. At the beginning of this forty-year Philistine dominance in the South, the Priest/Judge Eli died after governing for 40 years (1 Sam 4:18). This means that his administration exactly paralleled that of the Judgeship of Gideon, viz., 1211-1171 BCE. Thus, it appears that when Gideon became Judge in the northern part of Israel (north of Shilo) he appointed Eli the Priest to become a Judge from Shilo to the southern regions.

Filling in the Blanks

So, what we have determined thus far is that after the deaths of Gideon and Eli, there were then three separate narratives that all commence with the great apostasy that triggered the Philistine and Ammonite invasions in the year 1171 BCE.

1. **Judges 8:33-10:5** describes the events in the North under the Judgeships of Abimelech (where no captivity occurred) for three years (1171- 1168 BCE), Tola for 23 years (1168-1145 BCE), and Jair for 22 years (1145-1123 BCE).

It was due to the crumbling political situation of the squabbling Israelites to the North that the Philistines were able to invade the southern territory of Judah, Dan, and Benjamin, and put a strange hold of servitude on them which was to last a period of 40 years.

2. **Judges 10:6-12:15** describe the events in the Eastern/Transjordan district of Israel where we have the Ammonite invasion for 18 years (1171-1153 BCE), then the Judgeship of Jephthah for 6 years (1153-1147 BCE), then Ibzan for 7 years (1147-1140 BCE), Elon 10 years (1140-1130 BCE), and Abdon 9 years (1130-1121 BCE).

In the 18th year of the Ammonite Oppression, the Ammonites crossed the Jordan and invaded the area of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim (Judg 10:9). This action prompted the elders of Gilead on the East side of the Jordan to solicit the services of one soldier of fortune, viz., Jephthah, to lead the fight to drive back the Ammonites to their own territory. Jephthah, with a band of freebooters, took arms and accomplished this feat (Judg 11:11).

What was the political situation on the West side of the Jordan which emboldened the Ammonites to advance a thrust into that territory? It was, as mentioned above, the leadership vacuum caused by the passing of the strong and peaceful Judgeship of Gideon and the deteriorating political situation under his unrestrained son, Abimelech.

The Judges Period

In addition, as a result of Jephthah's bold move into the West, the western tribe of Ephraim took affront to the fact that Israelites from the east side of the Jordan took it upon themselves to go to arms and cross the Jordan and fight the Ammonites without involving the western Ephraimites. As a result of this outrage, the Ephraimites took up arms against Jephthah and his band of insurgents only to be ambushed, costing the Ephraimites a loss of over two thousand fighting men (Judg 12:6).

All of these events occurred within the pivotal year of 1153 BCE, mentioned by Jephthah in his official diplomatic correspondence with the king of Ammon, 300 years since the Israelites conquered the land of Canaan in the year of 1453 BCE.

3. Judges 13:1-16:31. This section of Judges relates the 20-year Judgeship of Samson. Since Samson was instrumental in bringing down the Philistines at the end of their 40 year domination (1171-1131 BCE), it would appear that the beginning of his Judgeship occurred in the 20th year of the Philistine oppression, *viz.*, 1151-1131 BCE.

Total defeat of the Philistines didn't end until Samuel's victory at Ebenezer in 1069 BCE (1 Sam 7:12-14). The ark of the covenant had remained at Kiriath-Jearim for 20 years previously (1 Sam 7:2). Eli had died in the year the ark was taken after a Judgeship of 40 years (1 Sam 4:18). Samson, of whom it was prophesied would "begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistine oppressors" was born at the beginning of the Philistine period (Judg 13:1-5). Samson did not deliver the Israelites, but as prophesied, "began" the deliverance. The death blow to Philistine occupation occurred when Samson destroyed the Temple of Dagon, killing more Philistines than Samson had slain in his entire life, including Philistine nobility gathered there for a pagan festivity (Judg 16:23-31). Thus, Samuel's opportunity to finish the job was wide open.

At this point, Samuel assumed official leadership and remained a Judge "all the days of his life" (1 Sam 7:3-15) and died close to the end of King Saul's reign (1 Sam 25:1).

Judges Preceding Gideon

The Judgeships and captivities before the end of the Ammonite Oppression are covered in Judges 3-11. If we total up all the years mentioned in the book of Judges from the oppression of Cushan to the beginning of the Judgeship of Jephthah, we must have a total of years that is less than 300 years mentioned in Judges 11:26 in order to account for the time to conquer the Land, Joshua's rule, the rule of the elders who "outlived Joshua" (Judg 2:7), the rising up of a new generation (Judg 2:10) and their rebellion (Judg 2:11), until the first mentioned captivity of Cushan-rishathaim. Let's see:

So far we are right on track with the limits that we are bounded by. Now if we subtract the 271 years derived in this tabulation from the 300 years mentioned by Jephthah, we get a balance of 29 years. We already have determined that from the invasion of Canaan in 1453 BCE to the Division of the Land was a period of seven years, *i.e.*, 1453-1446 BCE.

Also, if we can accept Josephus' statement that Joshua lived 25 years after the death of Moses in 1453 BCE, then this leaves a 4-year gap from the death of Joshua to Israel's first captivity of Cushan-rishathaim ($29 - 25 = 4$). We do not know if Caleb was still alive during those four years, and if he died at the end of that period, then that would explain the fact that there was a leadership vacuum that would have invited the Mesopotamian invasion under Cushan. The breakdown of this 300-year period is as follows:

The Early Period of the Judges

Table 16:

| Event | Years | Dates BCE | Dates AM | Reference |
|--|-------|-----------|-----------|--|
| Exodus. Moses age 80, Caleb age 38, Joshua age 45 | — | 1493 | 2478 | Exod 13:16 |
| Spies sent out in 2 nd year of Exodus | 2 | 1491 | 2480 | Num 9:1; 10:11 |
| Caleb, age 40 in 2 nd year of Exodus | 2 | 1491 | 2480 | Josh 14:7 |
| 38 years Wandering in the Wilderness | 38 | 1491-1453 | 2480-2518 | Josh 5:6 |
| Moses dies, age 120 | 40 | 1453 | 2518 | Deut 34:7 |
| Israelites invade Canaan 40 th of Exodus | 40 | 1453 | 2518 | Josh 4:19 |
| Counting of Jubilee years begins | 42 | 1451 | 2520 | See Appendix 5 |
| It took five years to conquer the Land | 45 | 1448 | 2523 | Josh 14:7, 10; Joseph. <i>Ant.</i> 5.1.19 |
| Division of Land begins exactly 400 years after death of Abraham^a | 45 | 1448 | 2523 | Gen 15:13-16; Josh 13:7-10 |
| Caleb age 85 in 2 nd year after Division, 7 years after entry into Canaan | 47 | 1446 | 2525 | Josh 14:10 |
| Death of Joshua, age 110 ^b | 65 | 1428 | 2543 | Judg 2:6-7 |
| <i>Death of Caleb?</i> | 69 | 1424 | 2547 | |
| Oppression of Cushan | 8 | 1424-1416 | 2555 | Judg 3:8, 11 |
| Judgeship of Othniel | 40 | 1416-1376 | 2555-2595 | Judg 3:9-11, 14 |
| Oppression of Eglon of Moab | 18 | 1376-1358 | 2595-2613 | Judg 3:14, 30 |
| Judgeship of Ehud | 80 | 1358-1278 | 2613-2693 | Judg 3:30 |
| Oppression of Jabin of Canaan | 20 | 1278-1258 | 2693-2713 | Judg 3:31, 4:3 |
| Judgeships of Barak, Deborah, and Shamgar | 40 | 1258-1218 | 2713-2753 | Judg 5:31 |
| Oppression of the Midianites | 7 | 1218-1211 | 2753-2760 | Judg 6:1; 8:28 |
| Judgeship of Gideon in North | 40 | 1211-1171 | 2760-2800 | Judg 8:28; 9:22 |
| Oppression of the Ammonites | 18 | 1171-1153 | 2800-2818 | Judg 10:8 |
| Judgeship of Jephthah ^c | 6 | 1153-1147 | 2818-2825 | Judg 12:7 |

a. For the true Biblical explanation of the 400 years of Genesis 15:13-16 see pages 33 - 35.

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b. The date for the death of Joshua is taken from Josephus, *Ant.* 5.1.29 [§117] (Whiston, 134): “So Joshua when he had thus discoursed to them, died, having lived a hundred and ten years; forty of which he lived with Moses, in order to learn what might be for his advantage afterwards. He also became their commander after his death for **twenty-five years**.” This is in agreement with the Biblical text Joshua 24:28, lacking the year. Thus, 1453 BCE (the year Moses died) - 25 years = 1428 BCE. Another point in the chronology of Josephus is an 18 year period which is not from the death of Joshua (as it seems to imply) but 18 years “in all” after the 7 years entry into Canaan which included the death of Joshua.

c. Three hundred years after entry into Canaan (Judg 11:21-24).

Understanding the 450 Years of Judges according to the Apostle Paul

As mentioned above, in the *Book of Acts*, the Apostle Paul made the following direct statement concerning the time period of the Judges:

“You Israelites, and others who fear God, listen. The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with uplifted arm he led them out of it. For about forty years he put up with them in the wilderness. After he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land as an inheritance for about 450 years. After that he gave them judges until the time of the prophet Samuel ...” (Acts 13:16-20).

So, it is apparent from this statement that the Apostle Paul reckoned the 450 years starting from the end of the 40 years in the wilderness until the beginning of the administration of the prophet Samuel. This obviously means that the only way to correctly understand the 450 year period of the Judges mentioned by the Apostle Paul in Acts 13:20 is to realize that it is simply nothing more than an aggregate sum of all the Servitudes and Judgeships that occurred during this time. In other words, there can be no way that these numbers are in series with each other. The only way that these numbers can be correctly understood is that they were in some way in parallel, as has been shown above.

Obviously, the Apostle Paul was certainly not trying to make a definitive chronological statement here. He merely stacked each period end to end as an illustration of the total number of aggregate years that the Israelites experienced during the Judges period all together.

Indeed, this fact was explained some 300 years ago by James Anderson:

But the Words of the Apostle P A U L, *Acts xiii.20*. ... are of no use in this Chronology; because the Apostle intended not to determine exactly the Number of Years belonging to the *Judges*, but only to specify the Number *usually* ascribed to those Judges by the *Jews* in his Time: ... **for from the beginning of Cushan's Oppression to Samuel, by that Addition of the Years of Servitude and Rest, there are just 450 Years, which the Apostle mentions only occasionally, with a Note of Inaccuracy, as it were, or about, the space of 450 Years,** the Number then commonly ascrib^d to the *Judges*, which therefore hinders not our stating the Account more exactly according to the express Scripture Proof above mention^d: For, by *adding* the Numbers, it was no less than 649 between the *Exodus* and the *Founding* of the *Temple*, which is 169 Years more than 480. **This has perplexed all Chronologers** (even the most accurate *Archbishop* USHER was mistaken in his new Way) till Sir JOHN MARSHAM cleared the Difficulty (in his Book call^d *Canon Chronicus*, p. 305) by allowing *Synchronisms* or Contemporaries, or that some of the Judges rul^d in the East while others rul^d in the *West*.⁵¹²

Anderson, writing nearly three centuries ago, was absolutely right in his assessment that “This has perplexed all Chronologers” in his day and even until now. He understood the principle “as it were, or about the space of 450 years.” Why? Let Dr. Ernest L. Martin further explain this principle:

⁵¹² Anderson, *Royal Genealogies*, 9 (emphasis the author's).

Did not the apostle Paul say that the period of the Judges alone was 450 years (Acts 13:20) and coupled with the years of the pre-Judges' period and the reigns of Saul and David it could well mean that the elapsed time from the Exodus to Solomon was more like 580 years (not the 480 years that First Kings say it was). Yes indeed, this would be the case if Paul was referring to those 450 years as occurring consecutively to one another. But Paul made no such reference. **His exact words from the Greek state: "as if" (or, "after a manner of speaking") and he really meant that his account is "one way of reckoning it."** The fact is, Paul's reference to the 450 years of the Judges' period was a type of aggregate sum in which he included both the servitudes by the various Gentile nations over Israel as well as the judgeships of the Israelites. Some of the "servitudes" and "judgeships" were actually contemporaneous to one another.⁵¹³

Yes, there were contemporaneous reigns as has been shown. Think of it in this way. Typically, on TV one sees advertisements from Law firms that state that they have over 150 years of experience on their staff. This does not mean that the law firm was in business for 150 years. What they are trying to say is that if you take all the years of experience of all the lawyers on their staff, the accumulative years of experience would add up to an equivalent of 150 years. This is exactly the same principle that the Apostle Paul was trying to convey, and not in any way a true chronological statement. This is confirmed simply by stacking up Paul's years in the order of what Scripture itself tells us. In the following table here is the stack-up of dates according to the Apostle Paul, but the restored dates that have been established by this research.

The 450 Year Period of the Judges Restored

Table 17:

| Judgeship/Oppression | Years | Dates BCE | Dates AM | Reference |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Oppression of Cushan | 8 | 1424-1416 | 2511-2519 | Judg 3:8 |
| Judgeship of Othniel | 40 | 1416-1376 | 2519-2559 | Judg 3:11 |
| Oppression of Eglon | 18 | 1376-1358 | 2559-2577 | Judg 3:14 |
| Judgeship of Ehud | 80 | 1358-1278 | 2577-2657 | Judg 3:30 |
| Oppression of Jabin | 20 | 1278-1258 | 2657-2677 | Judg 5:31 |
| Judgeship of Deborah and Barak | 40 | 1258-1218 | 2677-2717 | Judg 5:31 |
| Oppression of the Midianites | 7 | 1218-1211 | 2727-2724 | Judg 6:1 |
| Judgeship of Gideon | 40 | 1211-1171 | 2724-2764 | Judg 8:28 |
| Judgeship of Abimelech | 3 | 1171-1168 | 2764-2767 | Judg 9:22 |
| Judgeship of Tola | 23 | 1168-1145 | 2767-2790 | Judg 10:2 |
| Judgeship of Jair | 22 | 1145-1123 | 2790-2812 | Judg 10:3 |

⁵¹³ Ernest L. Martin, *The Home Study Course* (Portland, Oreg.: Academy for Scriptural Knowledge, 1985), 19 (emphasis mine).

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Table 17:

| Judgeship/Oppression | Years | Dates BCE | Dates AM | Reference |
|-------------------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Oppression of Ammon | 18 | 1171-1153 | 2764-2782 | Judg 10:8 |
| Judgeship of Jephthah | 6 | 1153-1147 | 2782-2788 | Judg 12:7 |
| Judgeship of Ibzan | 7 | 1147-1140 | 2788-2795 | Judg 12:7 |
| Judgeship of Elon | 10 | 1140-1130 | 2795-2805 | Judg 12:11 |
| Judgeship of Abdon | 8 | 1130-1122 | 2805-2813 | Judg 12:14 |
| Oppression of the Philistines | 40 | 1171-1131 | 2813-2853 | Judg 13:1 |
| Judgeship of Samson | 20 | 1151-1131 | 2853-2873 | Judg 15:20 |
| Judgeship of Eli | 40 | 1211-1171 | 2873-2913 | 1 Sam 4:18 |
| Total | 450 | | | |

What a remarkable collaboration with the Biblical numbers.⁵¹⁴ This list was compiled not chronologically, but in the exact sequence that occurred in Scripture. Obviously, all that the Apostle Paul did was do go down through the *Book of Judges* in the same manner as has been done here and recorded all the years within that sequence.⁵¹⁵ His purpose was not to try to produce a literal chronology of the Judges period, but merely trying to make a point about the cumulative years that Israel was subjected during all judgeships and servitudes.

So, finally, we can dispense with any idea that the 450 years figure represents a chronological era. It does not! More importantly, we can confidently dismiss the idea that the 450 years represents some kind of insurmountable discrepancy within Scripture. Indeed, if anything, it confirms the reliability of the chronological data that we are dealing with as being the very same numbers that are given in the Hebrew Masoretic text. The Apostle Paul was obviously relying upon that same original source. What an astounding confirmation of that fact!

Eli and Samuel

Eli and Samuel both lived during the time of the Judges and held that office themselves, even though they were not mentioned in the *Book of Judges*.

⁵¹⁴ Martin, *Home Study Course*, 19, also gives this same tally. I have known Dr. Martin personally for many years and I have always been perplexed by this following remarkable comment that he is on record making: “It is truly astonishing that this simple answer to Paul’s 450 years for the period of the Judges cannot be found in any commentary that I have seen ...” Really? Is not such a statement truly astonishing in itself for someone who had claimed to have had over a thousand books in his library, yet so out of touch with the very books in that library? Indeed, this exact same tabulation and explanation was given by James Anderson (*ibid.*) as far back as in 1732. It was also reiterated in the most famous commentary of all time, *i.e.*, Keil and Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament: Joshua, Judges, Ruth* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1875), 4:277.

⁵¹⁵ What we also can take away from this analysis is that the numbers that the Apostle Paul used for his calculations did not derive from the Septuagint chronology, but from the traditional and common text that was carefully preserved through the ages and became what is known as the Masoretic Text. That fact alone tells us that the LXX chronology is bogus!

Eli was a High priest during the Judgeship of Gideon (1211-1171 BCE) and resided in Shilo. He died at the age of 98 (1 Sam 4:15-18), so he was thus born in 1269 BCE. Eli's priesthood is established by the fact that he was the son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, brother to Ithamar, who both were sons of Aaron (Lev 10:12).

Samuel was born some years before Eli died, but we are not given any dates. Samuel lived right up until the time of King Saul died who died in 1057 BCE. So, when the Witch of Endor summoned the spirit of Samuel from the grave, she described him as an "old man" (1 Sam 28:19). Old indeed! He could have been between 120 and 130 years of age at the time of his death.

Upon the death of Eli, Samuel assumed the leadership role in the central area of Israel for the next twenty years (1171-1151 BCE). At that time Samson became Judge in the South for the next twenty years (1151-1131 BCE), leaving Samuel to assume overall leadership of the other local Judges.

The last of the Judges that we find in the *Book of Judges* was Jair in the North who died in 1123 BCE and Abdon in the East, who died in 1121 BCE. Samuel may have been in his mid-sixties at this time. We are then told that "when Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel" (1 Sam 8:1). So, obviously, he was an old man even before he coronated King Saul. In other words, his two sons Joel and Abijah probably succeeded Jair and Abdon as local judges and Samuel ruled as a kind of circuit Judge in an overall capacity until Saul became king some 24 years later in 1097 BCE.

Judges Chapters 17-21

The stories found within these five chapters seem to be tacked onto the overall *Book of Judges* as a sort of appendix that appears to only apply to the four years after the period between the death of Joshua (1428 BCE) and the first invasion of Israel by Cushan-rishrathaim (1424 BCE).

Within this period is a curious passage, Judges 18:30. The *King James Version* gives the following translation:

And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land (Judg 18:30, KJV, emphasis the author's).

Note the phrase "until the day of the captivity of the land." In other words, this is a verse that certainly implies that we are still in a period prior to "the captivity of the land."

Secondly, it is obvious that Gershom was the son of Moses (Exod 2:22; 18:3; 1 Chr 23:15-16; 26:24) — not the son of some unknown person by the name of "Manasseh." *The New Revised Standard Version*, the *Revised English Bible*, the *New American Bible*, the *New Jerusalem Bible*, and other modern versions all render this name as "Moses" rather than "Manasseh." Why?

Bullinger's commentary gives us insight into this very problem:

Manasseh. This word is one of the four that has a suspended letter. Here the letter (n), nun (n), is written partly in the line and partly above the line, to show that originally it formed no part of the word, but was put in to make it spell "Manasseh" instead of "Moses." Jonathan was the grandson of Moses (his contemporary Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, being mentioned in 20.28). This was done for two reasons: (1) to spare the honour of Moses' memory and name; (2) to put the sin upon one who committed so gross a sin. The Talmud gives this latter as the reason. Jonathan's name is omitted in 1 Chron. 23. 15, 16, and 26. 24. The Chald. paraphrase says that "Shebuel," there substituted, is meant for Jonathan after his repentance and restoration.⁵¹⁶

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So, what is important to our chronological study here is to understand that it appears that we are in a period that is in the second and third generation after the Exodus. Obviously, this Jonathan that is spoken of in this verse was the grandson of Moses, not the grandson of some unknown person by the name of Manasseh.

Furthermore, Judges 20:28 talks about the priest Phinehas, who was the son of Eleazar and the grandson of Aaron. Thus, these chapters are evidence of a time period that is still within the third generation of Moses and Aaron.

The Story of Ruth

We should also note that the story of Ruth occurred “in the days when the Judges ruled” (Ruth 1:1). She married a prominent man by the name of Boaz who was the son of Rahab, the Inn Keeper (not harlot!) who assisted the two Israelite spies in escaping out of the city of Jericho. Obviously, we are in a generation that must also be considered at the start of the Judges period; but there must be generational gaps, since the spies went out in 1453 BCE, whereas the first Judgeship under Othniel didn’t begin until 1376 BCE — 77 years later. If Boaz was the son of Rahab, then he was already a very old man.

Also consider the fact that typically when a severe famine occurs in Israel people usually go down to Egypt to get grain. However, this famine appears to be one due to a local drought confined to the area of Bethlehem because they went to Moab for relief — not Egypt. This serves as a clue.

When Elimelech chose to take his family to Moab it may be that this was during the Moabite occupation. Therefore, as unlikely as it might seem, the conclusion of Paul Ray that the story occurred during the 18-year Moabite Oppression (1376-1358 BCE) seems to be the best explanation.⁵¹⁷ Ruth 1:4 says that they stayed in Moab for 10 years. Therefore, this story probably occurred somewhere between 1372-1362 BCE.

So, at this point, we can confidently say that the chronology of the Judges period has at last been restored. But before moving to the Monarchical Period at this time, it is important to now look at the archaeology of the Judges Period and see how it fits with the chronology that has been thus far determined. In other words, does this chronology make sense with the archaeological data that has been unearthed? Indeed, it does. Let us now look at the astounding archaeological evidence that confirms the chronology thus far established.

⁵¹⁶ Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, 352.

⁵¹⁷ Paul Ray, “The Story of Ruth: A Chronological and Genealogical Perspective,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 20/1-2 (2009): 3-18.

CHAPTER 8

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE JUDGES PERIOD

*T*HE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PALESTINE SUFFERS FROM BEING INTERPRETED THROUGH THE false modern construct of Egyptian Chronology. In trying to understand the correct way to interpret the archaeological layers of Palestinian archaeology, there are basically three problems that students of ancient history must be aware of.

1. Egyptian Chronology is no Basis for Establishing Archaeological Eras.

We must always remember that there is a common ploy that scholars use in interpreting archaeological evidence. They build everything on the modern-day false construct of ancient Egyptian chronology; then use that false chronology to argue that it is the Bible that is in error. In no way is the modern theories about Egyptian chronology any basis to throw out the chronology of the Biblical record.

Students of history must realize this extremely important fact. There is no way that modern scholars can date anything unless they have some guide in which they can establish their concept of ancient historical periods. Unfortunately, they have thrown out the only real guide that can do that — the Biblical record. So, they then eagerly embraced the idea that the dynasties of Manetho were consecutive without any proof to substantiate such a monumental false assumption. Then, in total reliance upon that mutually accepted false chronology, they developed a scheme of archaeological eras based upon that faulty chronology in order to judge what the Bible soundly declared. Once that was done, they then used that erroneous chronology to then come back and criticize Biblical chronology. And scholars even admit that is what they did. Notice what a noted archaeologist, George Ernest Wright, long ago revealed:

The archaeology of Palestine now became better known and better fixed chronologically than that of any other Near Eastern country, both because of the amount of the work done and because that work was placed on a solid comparative basis, with the astronomically fixed Egyptian dynasties serving as the chronological underpinning of the Bronze Age deposits.⁵¹⁸

The Archaeology of the Judges Period

Most historians place the coming of the Israelites into Palestine in what they call the Late Bronze Age. Late Bronze Age I is dated *ca.* 1550-1400 BCE by modern scholars. Late Bronze Age II is dated *ca.* 1400-1200 BCE. Then scholars look for evidence in those archaeological periods and come up with nothing in support of Joshua conquering the cities of Canaan. And remember that they place the 18th Dynasty of Egypt in the Late Bronze Age as well. And there is no evidence of any Exodus either in the 18th or 19th Dynasties. So, because of this acceptance of Egypt's false chronology, this is what has led to many scholars rejecting the Biblical accounts altogether?⁵¹⁹

Obviously, something is very wrong with the entire approach to the chronology of ancient history. And what is wrong is that the dating of these archaeological eras is off by some 500 years too early. Is it any wonder why scholars cannot make the archaeological evidence jive with the Biblical dates? However, once we equate Joshua's invasion of Palestine with Middle Bronze I, then everything falls beautifully into place.

2. Many archaeological sites are incorrectly identified.

When scholars debate among themselves about whether a present-day archaeological site represents an ancient city or not, then there needs to be caution used in accepting broad pronouncements about results from such sites. Among them include the ancient cities of Dibon, Heshbon, Ai, and Bethel.⁵²⁰

3. Pottery sequences are subject to interpretation.

The main clue that archaeologists have to date certain layers at archaeological digs is pottery styles. However, much of this information is subjective due to similarities, inconsistent sequences at other sites, the problem of heirlooms, imports, and so on. As much as scholars would like to believe in their so-called discipline, "Biblical archaeology" is not an exact science. It is fraught with many variables. Indeed, some of the most heated debates among scholars are disputes concerning the correct dating of archaeological eras and what occurred during those eras.

We should therefore be armed with the knowledge that archaeology is a rough guide that cannot be used on the basis of the dates presently assigned to them by archaeologists. We should look at the overall evidence from all sources and reassign archaeological eras that are demanded by the chronology of the infallible Biblical record, and not vice-versa.

4. Scholars Ignore Data that Conflicts with their Theories.

One of the most striking things that Dr. Immanuel Velikovsky found was that there is a lot of evidence to support a lowering of Egyptian chronology, but much of it was either discounted by scholars, ignored by them, or even not discussed in any real debates. In other words, this evidence has been quietly swept under the carpet with the hope that the average reader would be none the wiser.

⁵¹⁸ Wright, "Archaeology of Palestine," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, 86. This is total nonsense! The reliance on Egypt's so-called "astronomically fixed" dynasties cannot be relied upon because of the many false assumptions that it requires (as will be shown in this study). For instance, the entire so-called "Bronze Age" is on a sliding time scale that is slaved to the erroneous chronology of ancient Egypt.

⁵¹⁹ Douglas Petrovich, "The Dating of Hazor's Destruction in Joshua 11 via Biblical, Archaeological, & Epigraphical Evidence," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51:3 (Sept 2008): 489-512.

⁵²⁰ John J. Bimson and David Livingston, "Redating the Exodus," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 13:5 (Sept.-Oct. 1987): 44, 48.

Of course, coupled with denial, is coming up with excuses to explain away the anomalies. Take for example the puzzling numbers of “out of context” scarabs.⁵²¹ When archaeologists Bliss and Macalister excavated Tell es-Safi, they found that thirty of those scarabs with the names of Thutmose III, Amenhotep III, and other 18th Dynasty pharaohs were found in a level they recognized as belonging to the time of the Divided Kingdom of Israel. Obviously, these scarabs were way out of context according to the generally accepted chronology of Egypt. So, rather than conclude that these scarabs were evidence that the 18th Dynasty should be brought down to the time of the Divided Monarchy, it was decided that it would be a lot easier to just come up with some other explanation concerning this anomaly:

Evidently some of them [scarabs], if not all, are mere Palestinian imitations of imported specimens, and are therefore of no value in fixing the date of associated objects. It is an elementary archaeological canon that under the most favourable circumstances scarabs alone can give a major limit of date only; when the element of copying, perhaps long subsequent to the engraving of the original exemplar, is introduced, their chronological importance practically disappears.⁵²²

Oh, how convenient of an explanation is that? Doesn’t just such an excuse exude of a desperate attempt at saving face? Now we all know that if these scarabs supported the conventional chronology, none of this back peddling would have ever been put forth as a credible explanation. Nevertheless, many students of history will never see any connection correctly being made in any modern history book. A case in point would be Donald Redford’s popular book, entitled *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*. He never addresses the problem with these scarabs, and when it comes to Hyksos scarabs, he merely says:

We are not, however, left to flounder in a sea of scarabs, **notoriously difficult**, as they are, to interpret for the benefit of the chronologist and historian alike
...⁵²³

So, what is the difficulty that is so “notorious” about these scarabs, pray tell? Scholars, who admit that these scarabs are “notoriously difficult” are one in the same people admitting that they are in the business of subterfuge. Does the average reader even comprehend what is going on here? The student of history is not treated to any discussion of these “notoriously difficult” scarabs. Why? Obviously, because they are an embarrassing “difficult” problem that is shaking the very foundation of their faulty chronology. It is about time that a new generation of students shake that foundation.

The Exodus — A Major Break in the Archaeological Record

Students of ancient history must come to this startling realization; the Exodus, the ensuing Hyksos period in Egypt, and the conquest of Canaan were such major historical events that it would be inconceivable that we should not find a significant break in the archaeological record for both Egypt and Palestine. But, alas, there is much archaeological evidence of this occurrence. The evidence is there, and that is proof that we are on the right track and modern historians are not.

⁵²¹ See Immanuel Velikovsky, “Scarabs,” *Pensée* (Winter 1973-4): 42-45; “A Reply to Stiebing,” *Pensée* (Winter 1973-4): 14-15.

⁵²² F. H. Bliss and R. A. S. Macalister, *Excavations in Palestine (1898-1900)*, (London: Palestine Exploration Society, 1902), 152.

⁵²³ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 119 (emphasis the author’s).

The Archaeology of the Judges Period

What do scholars have to lose in looking at all the evidence, and then adjusting the Egyptian chronology to align with archaeological evidence and the Biblical testimony? What we are talking about is not just one phase migrating into the next, and so on here, but a significant change in the population, the culture, the economy, and the movements of major populations. Is there such evidence? Yes, indeed, there is. And it is about time that students of history be presented that evidence and to admit that the conclusions of previous scholars are entirely against such evidence.

If there ever was a major break in the entire archaeological record of ancient Palestine, it is the division between what is known as the Early Bronze Age and Middle Bronze Age. The end of the Old Kingdom in Egypt is represented by archaeologists as the end of the Early Bronze period, *i.e.*, **EBIII**. Since the Old Kingdom of Egypt ended with the Exodus, archaeologically speaking, this represented that major break that we would expect to see in the archaeological record. Nowhere else in the history of the ancient Middle East is there such a glaring break that screams out that this is the very time of the Exodus itself.

The evidence is so loud and clear that it is about time that it is recognized by not only the scholarly world but the religious community as well. Nevertheless, modern-day scholars are so dug in with their outrageous interpretation of history they still deny this powerful evidence to be introduced into the discussion. Why? Because they believe that their false construct of ancient Egyptian chronology is what should drive Biblical chronology, and not the other way around.

Yet again, modern scholars themselves admit the obvious, but then conclude the opposite:

One of the most striking facts about the **Early Bronze civilization is its destruction, one so violent that scarcely a vestige of it survived**. ...cities, such as Beth-shan, Beth-yerah, Tell esh-Shuneh, and **Jericho in the Jordan Valley, and Ai in the hill country, were destroyed at the end of Early Bronze III**. We do not know when the event took place; we only know that there is not an Early Bronze city excavated or explored in all Palestine which does not have a gap in its occupation **between Early Bronze III and the Middle Bronze Age**. **To date this gap, we know that it must be approximately contemporary with a similar period in Egypt called the "First Intermediate" between Dynasties vi and xi (ca. 22nd-21st centuries B.C.), and further that it must occur during the "caliciform" period of Syria, represented by Amuq I-J and Hama J, but before the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age proper in both Syria and Palestine, which falls in the Egyptian Twelfth Dynasty.**⁵²⁴

What an astonishing admission! How obvious do facts have to be in order for modern-day scholars to come to their senses? How plainly do facts have to be in order for them to make the parallel with archaeology and the Biblical record? What more proof do we have to have than that the Exodus occurred at the end of Dynasty 6, which is at the end of the Early Bronze period?

Go back and read this account again. Do notice that this renowned archaeologist identified the end of Early Bronze III with the fall of Dynasty 6 of Egypt as being contemporary. Okay, there is no conflict with that assessment with the data in the Biblical narrative. Indeed, this is an astounding testimony that actually supports the Biblical narrative.

However, as long as the date of the end of Dynasty 6 is incorrectly placed, *viz.*, as early as 2100 BCE, modern-day scholars will never be able to come to any meaningful history of either ancient Egypt, the Bible, nor Archaeology. Such a date is enormously preposterous on all accounts, and cannot be supported by any archaeological evidence whatsoever.

⁵²⁴ Wright, "Archaeology," 103 (emphasis the author's).

So, returning to the archaeological record, let us now hear from the father of all modern archaeology, William F. Albright, who stated that following the Early Bronze III period, we have the following evidence:

... Early Bronze IV (or IIIB), is essentially a **supplementary phase of the preceding**; ... A good many towns in the southern hill-country were first settled in this period ... examples are Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth-shemesh. In Transjordan we find a rapid increase in the density of occupation, as we know from Nelson Glueck's exploration, confirmed by soundings at Ader and Bab edh-Dhra'. **This is the period of the Sixth Dynasty and the beginning of the First Intermediate in Egypt**, during which the commencement of West Semitic expansion [Hyksos] into Egypt is attested by hieratic documents.⁵²⁵

So, from this acknowledgment we are to understand that the Early Bronze IV period is equated with the collapse of the so-called "Old Kingdom." That assessment concurs with the Biblical record only if we understand that the Exodus occurred at the collapse of this pseudo-term, the "Old Kingdom" and Manetho's Sixth Dynasty.

The "West Semitic expansion of the [Hyksos] into Egypt" at this time are none other than the invading Amalekites. As the Israelites fled Egypt, "Then came Amalek" (Exod 17:8).⁵²⁶ Yes, on the heels of the demise of Egypt, the Amalekites swiftly came from the East, who heard about Egypt's destruction, and rushed in to take over that glorious kingdom of Egypt. Egypt was on its knees. It had been served the judgment of God. Egypt lay prostrate to an invading army. After the Exodus the Egyptian people were enslaved by the Hyksos and Egypt itself was politically, economically, and militarily destroyed for a period of some 400 years. Dr. Ernest L. Martin explains:

Barbaric tribes from the desert (probably the Amalekites, known as Hyksos) invaded and took over the land of Egypt. For about 400 years Egypt went into a period of economic and political decline. Not until the time of King Saul and King David of Israel does the Bible even mention Egypt, and when it does it shows that Amalekites were then occupying the northern parts of the country (1 Samuel 15:7, 27:8) and that the Egyptians were servants to the Amalekites (1 Samuel 30:11-13).⁵²⁷

The news of Egypt's collapse after the Exodus traveled fast, and the Amalekites knew that they had to act quickly in order to claim the spoils. They swiftly assembled their army and rushed to Egypt to take over its vast wealth and monuments for themselves. The Egyptians no longer had an army to defend themselves, and the Amalekites knew that. They conquered Egypt without any resistance.⁵²⁸

Continuing with William F. Albright's comments:

The most remarkable remains of this period [Early Bronze IV] are probably constituted by a series of open-air monuments in Transjordan. At Bab edh-Dhra', overlooking the Dead Sea from an eastern terrace, is a great open-air enclosure, defended by a wall of large field stones. Inside the enclosure and around it are many ancient hearths, with quantities of sherds from about the twenty-third to twenty-first centuries B.C. Outside, at a greater distance, are many graves dug in the ground and surrounded with small stones arranged in such a way as to resem-

⁵²⁵ Albright, *Archaeology of Palestine*, 77 (emphasis the author's).

⁵²⁶ See Ernest L. Martin, "The Basics of Old Testament History," 1986. Transcribed and edited by David Sielaff, Nov. 2000. (See online at <http://www.askelm.com/prophecy/p081101.htm>, accessed on Mar. 9, 2022).

⁵²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁸ Josephus, *A. Ap.*, 1.14 [§74-75] (Whiston, 778).

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ble megalithic dolmens superficially ... Most of the graves were covered by shallow tumuli.⁵²⁹

Once again, we are witnessing Biblical history starring us right square in the face! Had archaeologists gotten their dating correct, they would have immediately concluded that this is corroborative evidence that proves that was the great open-air camp-site at the exact period when the Israelites were about to enter Canaan in 1453 BCE does in fact fit with the facts of the Bible. Who else in ancient history could ever qualify for fitting such a description, pray tell?

Moses' Twelve Pillars Found?

Another corroboration that we are dealing with in the Exodus period is recorded in Exodus, the 24th chapter. There it is related that Moses built an altar in the Sinai desert that consisted of 12 pillars, each one representing the twelve tribes of Israel:

Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances, and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the Mountain, and set up twelve pillars, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel (Exod 24:3-4).

Archaeology has now found that exact site. Professor Immanuel Anati has investigated that possible site of *Mount Sinai* as being *Har Karmon* in the *Negev*.⁵³⁰ He has found evidence of religious activity at that site dating to the Bronze Age. His intriguing account of the find of these "pillars" is as follows:

On the last day of our 1982 campaign — December 20 to be exact — I was climbing down the mountain as the sun was descending in the western sky. ...The members of our expedition were packing and I made a short detour to examine more closely this structure at the edge of Site No. 52, one of the Bronze Age camp sites at the foot of the mountain. There were a group of 12 pillars or standing stones fixed vertically into the ground. Next to this group of *masseboth* were the remains of a structure that could not have been a dwelling place — it contained a platform and a courtyard. The surface finds did not indicate that it included any roofed rooms. This group of 12 pillars and the platform nearby vaguely reminded me of a passage in the Bible. I went on to our camp and took out a Bible and found that passage: "And Moses ... rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and 12 pillars, according to the 12 tribes of Israel" (Exodus 24:4). Twelve is a recurring number in the Bible, it is nevertheless, surprising that 12 pillars and a nearby structure were found "under [at the foot of] the hill [or mountain], at the edge of the camp site."⁵³¹

Anati further states:

To find such a niche or cleft on the very summit of a mountain is geologically quite unusual. I know of only one other such cleft on the top of a mountain: the cave on Jerusalem's Temple Mount, which is the traditional Mount Moriah, another very important holy place of Biblical times. On Mount Moriah, according to the Bible, Abraham offered to sacrifice his only son Isaac. Today the Dome of the rock stands on this site sacrificed by tradition.⁵³²

That this Bronze Age site is connected with that of the Israelites at Mount Sinai is plausible.

⁵²⁹ Albright, *Archaeology of Palestine*, 77-78.

⁵³⁰ Emmanuel Anati, "Has Mt. Sinai Been Found?," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 11:4 (Jul-Aug 1985): 42-57.

⁵³¹ Anati, "Mt. Sinai," 54.

⁵³² *Ibid.* For more reading on this, see the website: <http://www.harkarkom.com/> (accessed on Mar. 9, 2022).

If the narration of Exodus has any relation to actual events, the archaeological evidence indicates that the Exodus could only have occurred in the period of the Bronze Age Complex, in the third millennium B.C. (*sic!*). The traditional dating of the Exodus is simply wrong.⁵³³

No, the “traditional dating” or Biblical dating is not wrong. Unfortunately for Professor Anati is the fact that he still clings to the traditional “generally accepted date” (known as GAD) system, which is entirely wrong for this time period. That is his big mistake. And because Anati cannot give up this dating system, he thus wants to date the Exodus another six centuries earlier by clinging to this erroneous GAD time scale.

So, when professor Anati concludes that “the traditional dating of the Exodus is simply wrong” he is both right and wrong. He is absolutely right in the fact that it is at the end of the Early Bronze Age when the Exodus took place (and not Late Bronze), but he is wrong in still supporting the GAD system.

The Mysterious Middle Bronze Period

We next come to one of the most obscure periods in ancient Near Eastern history, known as Middle Bronze I. Scholars who support the GAD system place this period somewhere around 2100-2000 BCE. In so doing, they cannot possibly know who the MBI people were because of being straight-jacketed by their own false dating system. But once again scholars are dumbfounded by the true facts. But it is the archaeology that supports the Biblical record — not the false reconstruct of Egyptian history. Here is another example as to why modern scholars are totally incapable of correctly reconstructing the evidence which collaborates the Bible.

George E. Wright wrote concerning the MBI people:

A new people have entered the country and are beginning to settle down in unfortified villages, in the hill country, and especially in the Jordan Valley. In southern Transjordan where formerly people were nomadic, and even in the Negeb of southern Palestine. Their pottery seems to have been hand made for the most part, except for the necks and rims of some of the finer jars. ... Their occupation is thin and could not have lasted long, for very little architecture has survived.⁵³⁴

Here once again, we have exact evidence of a “new people” [Israelites] entering back into the old Canaanite territory. This exactly fits in with the Biblical invasion of Palestine by the Israelites. The evidence has been there all along, but modern constructs of Egyptian chronology have blocked and obscured the obvious thrust of this remarkable evidence. It is at this point that archaeologists dispute among themselves as to what to call this intrusive period. Notice this remarkable admission:

To Professor Kenyon the evidence definitely suggests **an intrusive people with new customs**, people who hitherto had been nomads. For this reason she calls the period Intermediate Early Bronze-Middle Bronze. Albright, in his pioneer treatment of this phase, named it Middle Bronze I, in order to keep Palestinian terminology in harmony with that in the Greek archaeological world. Miss Kenyon’s objection to Albright’s term is that the culture has nothing in common with Middle Bronze proper, indeed even less than with the culture preceding it. Hence the following period, Middle Bronze II A of Albright, is renamed Middle Bronze I [by Kenyon].⁵³⁵

⁵³³ Anati, “Mt. Sinai,” 57.

⁵³⁴ Wright, “Archaeology,” 104 (emphasis the author’s).

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*

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What chaos! The evidence clearly shows us that the true placement of Early Bronze IIIB should be from the time of the Exodus to the crossing of the Jordan forty years later under Joshua, *i.e.*, 1493-1453 BCE. It is at this point that we enter the short transitional period (Kenyon's Intermediate-Early Bronze or Albright's Middle Bronze I). This occurred from the crossing of the Jordan to the division of the Land, during the lifetimes of Joshua, Caleb, and the Elders, down until the invasion of Cushan-rishathaim of Mesopotamia, *i.e.*, 1453-1424 BCE.

Middle Bronze I begins with the crossing of the Jordan near Jericho. Modern-day archaeologists have confirmed this exact scenario. The relics of the Middle Bronze I people

seem to indicate a fresh migration into the town of a nomadic people who brought with them an entirely new tradition in pottery forms and new customs in burial practices. **They may have come into Palestine from the desert at the crossing of the Jordan near Jericho** [What?] and may then have pushed on to settle eventually at such places as Gibeon, Tell el-Ajjul, and Lachish, where tombs of this distinctive type have been found.⁵³⁶

What we are witnessing here is no less than the fact that archaeological evidence totally confirms the Bible. Indeed, the parallels with the so-called "mysterious" Middle Bronze I people and the invading Israelites are too numerous to be coincidental.

1. New People:

A new people have entered the country and are beginning to settle down in unfortified villages, in the hill country, and especially in the Jordan Valley, in southern Transjordan where formerly people were nomadic...⁵³⁷

2. Pottery:

The pottery unearthed at most sites represents an abrupt appearance of a new pottery style, and the differences are widespread.⁵³⁸ It is unrelated to the pottery style of the Early Bronze III pottery.⁵³⁹

3. Invasion:

On the basis of pottery evidence alone Kathleen Kenyon postulated that the "new people" represented an invading force of a new group type.⁵⁴⁰

Palestine thus received a great invasion of nomadic groups in the last centuries of the second millennium [*sic!*], which completely blotted out the preceding urban civilization of the Early Bronze Age.⁵⁴¹

...Palestine was at that time in the throes of tribal upheaval, and there was much destruction and abandonment of towns.⁵⁴²

4. Diet:

Of the animal remains found, there is little, if any evidence of pig bones.

⁵³⁶ James B. Pritchard, *Gibeon, Where the Sun Stood Still* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962), 153.

⁵³⁷ Wright, "Archaeology," 104. See also Kathleen M. Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land*, (London: Ernst Benn Ltd., 1960), 134.

⁵³⁸ Amon Ben-Tor, *Archaeology of Ancient Israel* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 137.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁰ Kenyon, *Archaeology*, 136; Wright, "Archaeology of Palestine," 104.

⁵⁴¹ Kenyon, *Archaeology*, 136 (emphasis the author's).

⁵⁴² Albright, *Archaeology*, 80.

Between the units were open-air enclosures used principally for food preparation, as we know from the remains of cooking pots and animal bones, **mostly sheep and goat**.⁵⁴³

Archaeologists have also commented on numerous other similarities with the invading Israelites, which we will not belabor here.⁵⁴⁴ The evidence is so overwhelming to connect the Israelites with the Middle Bronze society that took over the Land of Canaan that it is inconceivable that such evidence alone would not be enough for the scholarly world to rethink their entire outline of ancient history. But it isn't.

So, what is the problem? First of all, history has to make sense. Do the numerous books on ancient Near Eastern history really make any sense at all? No! Discussions about vague ethnic groups and their migration patterns are mere speculative theories that provide us no real history at all. Harmony with Archaeology and the Bible can only be achieved once we free ourselves from the tyranny of the fallacious GAD system.

Middle Bronze IIA

The invasion of Cushan-rishathaim of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:7-10) brought with it a new cultural influence into Canaan. Scholars, without any guidance, of course, are left to conjure up a completely mythological explanation concerning some "Amorite" expansion and then try to explain that cultural influence as that from Dynasty 12 of Egypt. What nonsense! All they are doing is muddying up the waters and making it impossible for them to get themselves out of their own ridiculous web of self-deception.

Concerning this period, notice again the remarks by the noted archaeologist, George E. Wright:

A new wave of cultural influence spread over Syria and Palestine during [MB IIA] ...It is a fresh and very vigorous culture, with little direct contact with the preceding to be noted in the material remains, except for the cooking pots which seem to be continued from Middle Bronze I. ...Middle Bronze II A represents the period when the "Amorite" settlement became so strongly entrenched under the power of fresh cultural influence that it was now able to dominate northern Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine.⁵⁴⁵

Amorite expansion? What are these people talking about? There was no such thing as an "Amorite expansion!" What we are witnessing here is the influence of the Mesopotamians on the Israelite culture who had invaded Canaan for a brief period under Cushan-rishathaim (1424-1416 BCE). This short period, however, extended into Middle Bronze **MB IIB** and **MB IIC**.

During the latter part of the Middle Bronze Age new ethnic groups came to the fore. Hurrians, who had been known in northern Mesopotamia since the third millennium B.C.E., increased in number and became an important factor there and in northern Syria. Some of them reached Palestine and assimilated into the Canaanite (*sic!* Israelite) population ...⁵⁴⁶

⁵⁴³ Rudolph Cohen, "The Mysterious MBI People: Does the Exodus Tradition in the Bible Preserve the Memory of their Entry into Canaan?" *Biblical Archaeological Review* 9:4 (Jul-Aug 1983): 21.

⁵⁴⁴ See Vern Crisler, "Middle Bronze I Fact Sheet." Online article, 2009, at <https://vernerable.wordpress.com/archaeology/middle-bronze-i-fact-sheet/> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

⁵⁴⁵ Again, Vern Crisler, "Middle Bronze I Fact Sheet." Online article, 2009, at <http://vernerable.wordpress.com/archaeology/middle-bronze-i-fact-sheet/> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

⁵⁴⁶ Mazar, *Archaeology*, 192.

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Hurrians? Really? What are we talking about? This is not history! This is scholars adrift in bogus speculation because they have rejected the only true chronological guide to historical truth.

Middle Bronze II B/C

Let us move on and see what other tangled webs are concocted by modern-day scholars who seek to write history in a vacuum. Archaeologists William F. Albright and George E. Wright divided the later period of Middle Bronze into subdivisions B and C based on a refined ceramic typology. Kathleen Kenyon, however, noted five distinctive phases based on pottery assemblages at Jericho.⁵⁴⁷

What could explain these five sub-phases? When we look at the period of Judges, it is characterized by alternating periods of “Oppressions” and peaceful “Judgeships.” And it just so happens that there were five notable periods, exactly as Dame Kenyon had grouped this era.

Kenyon’s Middle Bronze Five Sub-Phases

Table 18:

| Phase | Dates | Layer Deposits |
|-------|-----------|---|
| 1 | 1416-1358 | Judgeship of Othniel (40 years) and Ammonite Oppression (18 years). |
| 2 | 1358-1278 | Judgeship of Ehud (80 years); Major deposits, time of peace. |
| 3 | 1278-1218 | Oppression of Jabin (20 years); Philistine incursions; Judgeship of Barak (40 years). |
| 4 | 1218-1171 | Oppression of Midianites (7 years); Judgeship of Gideon (40 years). |
| 5 | 1171-1097 | Philistine and second Ammonite Invasion; Judgeships of Jephtha, Samson, and Samuel, down to the time of King Saul |

The Middle Bronze Age ends in Palestine with the sudden destruction of every major city. It is for this reason that a number of chronological revisionist scholars mistakenly (and unfortunately) believe that this period represents the time of Joshua’s invasion.⁵⁴⁸ It is not! The destructions in Palestine that occurred at that time was not the conquest under Joshua, nor did they have anything to do with the bankrupt theory of Pharaoh Merneptah (who is dated some seven centuries too early).

Rather than this time period being that of Joshua, it was the time period of the final overthrow of the Philistines under Samson, Samuel, and Saul. Once the Israelites were completely free of the Philistines, then we enter into a new blossoming of Israelite culture under kings David and Solomon.

⁵⁴⁷ Mazar, *Archaeology*, 193.

⁵⁴⁸ Bimson and Livingston, “Redating,” 51.

Albright's MB II Classifications

William F. Albright classified the Middle Bronze II period into three main subdivisions, *viz.*, A, B, and C. He used the Hyksos period in Egypt to define these three eras, *viz.*, Early Hyksos, Middle Hyksos, and the Last Hyksos phase, respectively.⁵⁴⁹

Albright's Middle Bronze II and its Three Sub-Phases

Table 19:

| Phase | Dates | Layer Deposits |
|-------|-----------|---|
| A | 1493-1234 | Early Hyksos period Dynasty 15 (Kenyon's phases 1-3) |
| B | 1234-1184 | Middle Hyksos, time of the Apophis II transition (Kenyon's phase 4) |
| C | 1184-1081 | Last Hyksos phase, Dynasty 17 (Kenyon's phase 5) |

The Problem of Jericho

As the old African American “spiritual” goes, “*Joshua fit the Battle of Jericho.*” This was the first city that the Israelites encountered in the Land of Canaan. But after the walls “*came a tumblin’ down,*” Joshua placed a curse on anyone who would rebuild Jericho “*at the cost of*” their firstborn-son and youngest son if they so attempted such a project:

Joshua then pronounced this oath, saying, “Cursed before the LORD be anyone who tries to build this city — this Jericho! At the cost of his firstborn he shall lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest he shall set up its gates!” (Josh 6:26).

Fulfillment of this curse supposedly did not occur until some five and a half centuries later in the time of King Ahab of Israel. The fulfillment of this verse was a sub-text to:

Ahab did more to provoke the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than had all the kings of Israel who were before him (1 Kgs 16:33).

Next, immediately after this statement is inserted this “oh, by the way” comment:

In his days [*i.e.*, Ahab's] Hiel of Bethel built Jericho, he laid its foundation at the cost of Abiram his firstborn, and set up its gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the LORD, which he spoke by Joshua son of Nun (1 Kgs 16:34).⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁹ Albright, *Archaeology*, 84.

⁵⁵⁰ This verse is certainly vague enough to speculate on how Hiel paid the price of Joshua's curse. However, neither Joshua 6:26 nor 1 Kgs 16:34 states that there was a loss of life involved with this curse. Both verses use the word “at the cost of ...” It is only wild and unwarranted imagination that interprets either a human sacrifice or divine retribution on Hiel's sons. Consider where did Hiel get the funds for a massive building project in Jericho anyway? Was it necessary for him to sell his sons into slavery? More logically, if Hiel was wealthy enough to engage in such an enterprise, did Ahab ransom his sons to motivate him to carry out such a project? In the light of Ahab's evil assessment, that would seem to make the most logical sense. Therefore, that would end up being the cost that Hiel eventually had to pay.

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Did Jericho in fact lay waste for four and a half centuries? Notice what Kathleen Kenyon recorded:

The latest of the Early Bronze Age town walls at Jericho was destroyed by fire. With this destruction, town life there came to an end for a space of several hundred years. New comers, who were presumably the authors of the destruction, settled in considerable numbers in the area, but they did not build for themselves a walled town. They spread all down the slopes of the mound and over a considerable part of the adjoining hillside ...⁵⁵¹

Now, in the light of this, notice the significant comment of Rudolph Cohen concerning the archaeological implications of this curse:

In the central and northern parts of Israel, the EBIII urban culture flourished. The MBI invaders in the south overwhelmed this urban Canaanite civilization and destroyed their cities but thereafter persisted in a semi-nomadic way of life. This bears a striking similarity to the tradition of Joshua's devastating campaign against the Canaanite centers in central Palestine and his ban on rebuilding some of them (e.g., Joshua 8:28). Both Jericho and Ai were fortified cities at the end of the Early Bronze Age. According to the Biblical account, they were both destroyed by the Israelites: God specifically instructed that these cities should not be rebuilt. Interestingly enough, **after the EB III destruction of Jericho and Ai, both cities lay in ruins for hundreds of years.**⁵⁵²

It is one thing to identify certain pottery patterns with such and such a people and identifying them into some archaeological period. But the fact that after EBIII Jericho was not rebuilt for centuries — a leading city in Canaan — is a phenomenon that at least certainly must give us pause in the light of what the Bible says about the matter. This is a fact that could not be the result of coincidence. Where in all of the history of Palestine were parallels so precise with the Biblical and archaeological records?

Cohen continues:

The late Yohanan Aharoni made a similar suggestion when he noted that the Biblical tradition considering the destruction of the two Canaanite cities Arad and Horma could not be placed, archaeologically speaking, in the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age (there were no cities there then) — although this is the period to which the arrival of the Hebrews is normally ascribed — but had remarkable parallels in MBII, when these two strategic outposts in the Beer-Sheva basin guarded the country's southern approaches.⁵⁵³

Cohen seems to be getting too close to the truth. His peers certainly would not appreciate the fact that he is getting dangerously close to the Biblical narrative in his deductions. The anti-Biblical bias among secular scholars must never be violated — pure and simple! Nevertheless, professor Cohen seems undaunted to boldly march forward and conclude with his well-documented article this final powerful statement:

The similarity between the course of the MBI migration and the route of the Exodus **seems too close to be coincidental.**⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵¹ Kenyon, *Archaeology*, 137.

⁵⁵² Cohen, "MBI People," *BAR* (Jul-Aug 1983): 28 (emphasis the author's).

⁵⁵³ Cohen, "MBI People," 29.

⁵⁵⁴ Cohen, "MBI People," 29 (emphasis the author's).

“Too coincidental?” Really? But of course it **seems** to be “too close to be coincidental” because it is not coincidental at all. It is actual. If Egyptian chronology wasn’t screwed up, every scholar on the planet would use this evidence of conclusive proof of the Israelites entering Canaan.

Thank you Professor Cohen for the kind of honesty rarely seen by modern secular scholars who are guilty of rewriting history in order to destroy the real history that is preserved in the Biblical record. What professor Cohen is telling us is that the so-called MBI and the Exodus are not just similar, but in reality, we are witnessing the very evidence of the Exodus itself.

Yet, once again, scholars are defiant in refusing to believe their own eyes. They have misdated MBI by as much as five hundred years prior to the actual occurrence of the Exodus. The proof has been there all along. The archaeological evidence screams out that Biblical history is true after all and is the only way to reconstruct ancient history. But modern-day scholars cannot accept the fact that the Biblical record has been right all along, despite modern theories to the contrary.

The Walls of Jericho

Jericho has been one of the most thoroughly excavated sites in the Middle East. It is one of the oldest cities in the world, dating back to the Neolithic period. It may very well be the pre-flood Biblical city that Cain built named after his son, “the City of Enoch” (Gen 4:17).

The thing about Jericho and the story of Joshua in the Bible is the fact that the “walls came a-tumblin’ down.” Obviously, one of the main goals of modern archaeologists, such as the early excavators Ernest Sellin and Carl Watzinger (1908-11), John Garstang (1930-36), and Kathleen Kenyon (1952-58), was to see if these “walls” of Joshua’s story could be identified in the archaeology of that city. And, true to form, these tumbled-down walls were apparently found by John Garstang. Not only were they found, but the nature of the remains matched the story of Joshua so perfectly that we have a match that cannot be ignored.

Among the finds by Garstang was the discovery of the double line of walls around the city which had been thrown down violently, apparently by earthquake, and which Garstang positively regarded as those destroyed at the time of Joshua. The bricks of the walls had been thrown down the sides of the slope of the mound, and the outer wall base had been tilted *outward*, give further indication that the destruction had been a violent one by natural causes. ...The burned debris inside the city were in places as much as two feet deep.⁵⁵⁵

What other conclusion could one make other than the outward tilted walls represented a violent destruction due to the forces of nature. Garstang had placed the conflagration to about the year of 1400 BCE, which fairly matches the Biblical date of 1453 BCE. He based his date on pottery found in the destruction debris, Egyptian scarabs, and the fact that he found no Mycenaean pottery.

Then along came on the scene was the British archaeologist, Dame Kathleen Kenyon. She reaffirmed what Garstang had found. She further noted the following:

One cannot doubt that this time the destruction of the walls was the work of enemies. At a time when, through neglect or some earlier catastrophe, the town wall had been, at least in the area of Trench 1, razed to ground level, news of imminent danger caused the inhabitants to rebuild their defenses in headlong haste. Before the task was completed, they were overwhelmed. The disaster was indeed complete, for this was the end of Early Bronze Age Jericho.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵⁵ Donovan A. Courville, *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications* (Loma Linda, Calif.: Crest Challenge Books, 1971), 1:66.

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Yes, indeed it was. Early Bronze III came to an end at the time of the Exodus, and Early Bronze IV came to an end at the destruction of Jericho, thanks to Kathleen Kenyon's honest appraisal.

Commenting on this, Geoffrey Gammon further noted:

Moreover, there are marked differences between the Early and Middle Bronze Age cultures of Palestine as a whole, including Jericho. The pottery of the post-destruction layer gives evidence not only of improved technique but also new forms, while bronze succeeds copper as the metal most in common use. Palestine also had new inhabitants.⁵⁵⁷

Kathleen Kenyon further stated:

The archaeological evidence at Jericho and other sites shows clearly that towards the end of the third millennium [*sic!*] the urban Early Bronze civilization was disrupted by the incursion of a large number of new groups, nomadic in habit, and with a **tribal social organization**.⁵⁵⁸

Of course, it does! Once again, the Bible is vindicated. Could anything be clearer? The new nomadic groups that entered Canaan at the end of Early Bronze had a strong “**tribal social organization**.” Of course they did! This is archaeological evidence of the Twelve Tribes of Israel staring us in the face! With evidence like this staring us right in the face, how could anyone deny such a connection? Nevertheless, modern-day scholars refuse to budge on the issue of Egyptian chronology because they must deny any connection with the Biblical account no matter what.

Indeed, Kathleen Kenyon herself did in fact deny the connection with the events of Joshua's invasion. And why? Because she felt that Jericho was not destroyed around 1400 BCE, as John Garstang had dated it, but rather accepted Watzinger and Sellin's date of 1550 BCE. The effect of this date change meant that, since after the conflagration, the city had been abandoned. Then, when the Israelites supposedly came a century later, there was no city there left to destroy.

Of course, this was welcome news to secular historians. Rather than proving Joshua's invasion of Canaan, it supposedly proved just the opposite. Thus, scholars were freed from having to work within the Biblical chronological requirements and could now treat the Joshua story as a later myth woven together by what they term “Deuteronomists” who sought to aggrandize Israel's past by fabricating a fabulous tale. The real fabulous tale, however, is the modern reconstruction of Egyptian history.

Kenyon's Final Report

In 1990 a very intriguing article was published in the *Biblical Archaeological Review* by the scholar Bryant G. Wood, entitled “Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho?”⁵⁵⁹ What professor Wood did was to examine the final reports of Kathleen Kenyon which weren't published until 12 years after her death in 1978. And he made some amazing discoveries. He stated:

Some 30 years after her excavation of the site — indeed, 12 years after Kenyon's death — the detailed evidence has now become available in the final report. So it is time for a new look.

⁵⁵⁶ Kenyon, *Archaeology*, 186.

⁵⁵⁷ See Geoffrey Gammon, “The Walls of Jericho,” *Society for Interdisciplinary Studies Review* 1:3 (Summer 1976): 5.

⁵⁵⁸ Kenyon, *Archaeology*, 211 (emphasis the author's).

⁵⁵⁹ Bryant G. Wood, “Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho: A New Look at the Archaeological Evidence,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 16:2 (Mar-Apr 1990): 44-59.

... Kenyon died in 1978 without living to see the final publication of her excavation of the tell. Her conclusions were reported only in a popular book published the year before she completed her field work.

... The detailed evidence, however, was never supplied. This became available only in 1982 and 1983 when two volumes on pottery excavated from the tell were published. This together with the stratigraphic data from the excavation, published in 1981, makes it possible to perform an independent assessment of Kenyon's conclusions.⁵⁶⁰

One striking thing that Professor Wood noticed was that Kenyon's deduction for her dating scheme was based on the fact of what she did not find — *not on what she actually found!* Is that not negative evidence to prove a point? Also, Wood realized that Kenyon only excavated in a poor section of Jericho. So, the people in this section were less likely to acquire exotic Cypriot ceramic imports in the first place.

Ironically, Garstang found a considerable quantity of pottery decorated with red and black paint which appears to be imported Cypriot bichrome ware, the type of pottery Kenyon was looking for and did not find! ...It showed up in erosional layers on the east side of the tell. Evidently it originated in a large structure up-slope, which Garstang referred to as the palace.⁵⁶¹

The main thrust of Wood's article was to show that: 1) Kathleen Kenyon was not exactly honest in her analysis of the data; and 2) that there was continuous population down until the Late Bronze I period, the time that Wood, unfortunately, placed the Conquest. He still attempts to explain the Conquest using conventional Egyptian chronology based upon the "generally accepted date" system, which, of course, threw him off the track, as well as everyone else.

The Problem of Ai

After the fall of Jericho, the next city to be conquered was the city of Ai. A lot of discussion and controversy has occurred concerning the correct identification of Ai as being the modern archaeological site, known as Khirbet et-Tell, which lies exactly between Jericho and Bethel.⁵⁶² The reason for this controversy is that scholars have found that there is no evidence that Ai was even in existence at the time of Joshua. But again, scholars who have come to such a conclusion do so on the basis of their erroneous dating schemes.

Once we understand that the fall of Ai occurred at the end of EBIII and the beginning of MBI, then all the seeming problems disappear. Once again, when these archaeological periods are correctly aligned with the Biblical chronology, then everything falls exactly into place. And here is the evidence to prove just that:

During the period archaeologists call Early Bronze IB (c. 3100 B.C.-3000 B.C.), an unwallled village existed on the Tell. Gradually, this village grew until it developed into a major walled city of 27.5 acres in Early Bronze IC (c. 3000 B.C.-2860 B.C.). **This city was destroyed at the end of Early Bronze IIIB** (c. 2550 B.C.-2350 B.C.), and the site remained unoccupied for more than 1,100 years.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶⁰ Wood, "Jericho," *BAR* (1990): 45.

⁵⁶¹ Wood, "Jericho," *BAR* (1990): 52.

⁵⁶² See Ziony Zevit, "The Problem of Ai," *BAR* 11:2 (Mar-Apr 1985): 58-69. See also David Livingston, "The Location of Biblical Bethel and Ai Reconsidered," *Westminster Theological Journal* 33:1 (1970): 20-44.

⁵⁶³ Zevit, "The Problem of Ai," *BAR* 11:2 (Mar-Apr 1985): 58 (emphasis the author's).

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No, no, no, Ai certainly did not remain unoccupied for some 1100 years. This is the kind of reasoning based on Egyptian chronology. The problem is that EB IIIB should be correctly dated some 1100 years later than where archaeologists presently place it. Once that is done, then everything falls into place. Indeed, the problem not only vanishes into thin air but the reaffirmation of the Biblical record reassures us that it is Biblical chronology that is right on track.

In Search of Honesty in Palestinian Archaeology

At this point, we must confront the ancient history scholarly community as to the crime that they have knowingly committed. Archaeologists, coupled with secular historians, appear to have a united front in order to defraud an unsuspecting public. But, alas, they do not. And why is this? Because every now and then some fully credentialed member of the archaeological community breaks ranks and starts spewing some nonsense about how MBI looks a lot like the Biblical story of Joshua. And, of course, this makes many secular scholars' heads explode.

One such archaeologist who broke rank with the standard party line (as mentioned above) was Rudolph Cohen.⁵⁶⁴ Cohen, unfortunately, did not suggest lowering the GAD time periods,⁵⁶⁵ but rather suggested that the author of Joshua/Judges reflected a memory of a story of how the Israelites originally entered Canaan. Why was he compelled to explain it in this way? Because the material remains so supported the Exodus narrative that in all honesty, he could not deny the facts, as so many of his colleagues were willing to do. Here is an example of Cohen's forthright honesty:

The pottery, the settlements, and other aspects of the material culture of the MBI people that have been uncovered over the last 50 years differ significantly from what went before in the Early Bronze II period. ...In MBI, however, there was a notable absence of urban settlements, although such settlements continued to flourish on the sea coast of Lebanon and Syria. However, the relationship of the MBI to what went before and to what went after is currently a matter of intense scholarly debate.⁵⁶⁶

Although Cohen stated that the relationship of the MB I people is a matter of *intense* scholarly debate, he nonetheless appears to be helpless in explaining why. But we know why. It is because he is stuck in the mud of the GAD system. Furthermore, the reason is that scholars have mis-dated the Middle Bronze I period by some 750 years too early. So, is it any wonder that MBI is placed in a period where there are no Biblical parallels nor any classical historical parallels?

Left to their own devices, modern-day secular scholars wander aimlessly in an area of total speculation. And when that happens, it is just a matter of time when some scholars cannot help themselves and do the unthinkable — give an honest report on what they have unearthed.

Rudolph Cohen is one such scholar. He goes on to discuss the various theories advanced by leading scholars in the field, such as William Foxwell Albright, George Ernest Wright, Kathleen Kenyon, Nelson Glueck, Paul W. Lapp, William Dever, and so on. Unfortunately, Bill Dever vainly tried to bring all of these conflicting ideas back to a united theme:

⁵⁶⁴ Cohen, "MBI People," 16-29.

⁵⁶⁵ Scholars who rely upon radiocarbon dating methods are confident that C¹⁴ dating methods support their chronology. In some cases, there is support, and in others there is not, based upon either contamination or the reliability of the method. See Hendrik J. Bruins, "Radiocarbon Dating the 'Wilderness of Zin,'" *Radiocarbon* 49:2 (2007): 481-97.

⁵⁶⁶ Cohen, "MBI People," 17-18.

Dever now maintains that there is no real gap between the material cultures of EB and MBI, particularly with regard to pottery types. Instead of viewing the MBI culture as an intrusive, “intermediate” culture, Dever now contends that the period can be understood as the natural development of the third-millennium Early Bronze Age civilization which, in its final stages, and for reasons still unknown, underwent a transformation, in which urban centers were gradually abandoned for a pastoral, transhumance way of life. Apparently, ecological changes played a major part in effecting this transformation.⁵⁶⁷

What a bunch of malarkey! Despite Dever’s attempt to reunite archaeologists (so, at least they can appear to have a united front), many specialists in the archaeological community (especially in the Israeli Archaeological community) weren’t buying his futile attempt to unite the scholarly community with such an unconvincing attempt.

...in April 1982, at the ninth Archaeological Conference in Israel, [Moshe] Kochavi criticized Dever’s theory; the consensus is perhaps still far off. Kochavi maintains that there remains too many jarring discontinuities in the material culture, both ceramic and otherwise, to explain MBI as an offshoot of the Early Bronze Age.⁵⁶⁸

Then Cohen introduced his own conclusion based upon the material evidence.

My own conclusion is that the MBI culture must be differentiated from those both preceding and following it. ...But this new ethnic element was neither Amorite [Kenyon’s theory] nor “Kurgan” [Paul Lapp’s theory] peoples who supposedly came from the north and east. **In my view, the new MBI population came from the south and the Sinai, the route of the Israelites on that journey known as the Exodus.**⁵⁶⁹

Wow! Thank you, thank you, thank you, Dr. Cohen. You are a rare scholar indeed among the ancient historical community. Finally, intellectual honesty wins over the nonsense of so-called modern secular scholarship.⁵⁷⁰ Hopefully, a new generation of young scholars will follow in the footsteps of Dr. Cohen. It is not the chronological revisionists that are wrong, it is the anti-Biblical secular scholars who are dead wrong! And the proof is right in the archaeological record itself.

The Problem of Compression

The one argument that Egyptologists believe that is unassailable is the so-called problem of compressing Egyptian chronology (and Archaeology) by some 600 years in order to sustain an “Old Kingdom” Exodus. They argue that one cannot compress all the dynasties of Egypt down to the thoroughly documented 26th Dynasty without turning all of ancient chronology on its head. In other words, the biggest objection seen by modern secular scholars is that it is impossible to bring down the archaeological eras (and the associated Egyptian dynasties) by some 600 years. That would force the remaining periods before the established Persian period to be compressed to an unacceptable degree. But this is not the case at all.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 19.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid* (emphasis the author’s).

⁵⁷⁰ Of course, Israeli archaeologists like Cohen and Kochavi have fallen from grace among the Deverites, becoming now nothing more than Ancient Israel apologists. Nevertheless, Cohen’s important contribution breaks the good-ole-boy lock on the party line that Palestinian Archaeologists have foisted on Ancient Near Eastern studies for the last two centuries.

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In the case of Egyptian dynasties, the objection would be legitimate if it weren't for the fact that there is evidence that parallel dynasties did exist, which secular scholars refuse to admit. Nevertheless, this will be thoroughly explained as we move forward in the next volume.

As far as archaeological eras is concerned, the answer is somewhat similar, but a little more complicated due to the fact that some cities in the Persian and Greek periods were parallel to the conquered Israelite cities, but exhibited different cultural influences. This will also be explained as we move along. In any case, we have to realize that the Bible substantiates archaeology and not the other way around.

The point to realize is that the so-called Middle Bronze Age paralleled the Period of the Judges. The 18th Dynasty of Egypt actually begins the so-called Late Bronze Age during the monarchy of Saul, David, and Solomon.

The end of the Middle Bronze Age was a period of war. This reflects the final overthrow of the Philistines, but also includes the struggle in the days of Saul and the northern Israelites against David and Jerusalem in the south. The beginning of the Late Bronze Age in Israel was the beginning of a new Israelite revival under Saul, David, and Solomon.

Thus, Dynasties 14 through 17 represent the Hyksos period and correctly occurred during the time of the Judges of Israel. After that comes Dynasties 18 through 26, which occurred during the Monarchy and Divided Monarchy of Israel, and into the Persian period.

Dynasties 26 through 31 are basically correctly placed by modern scholars. However, the big surprise is that Dynasties 20 and 21 should be correctly placed during the Persian and Greek periods. Once those dynasties are restored to their correct place in history, then the so-called problem of compression totally vanishes.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁷¹ See Appendix 1 for a graphical resolution to this problem.

CHAPTER 9

THE TROJAN WAR

*T*HE CLASSIC STORY OF THE FAMOUS TROJAN WAR OCCURRED DURING THE TIME OF the Judges in Israel. And as it turns out there are significant connections that allow us to see that the Trojan people themselves were Israelites that did not follow Moses in the dessert back and finally back to the “Promised Land.”⁵⁷² Some decided to venture off in different directions.

The story of the Trojan war was handed down to us by the famous Greek poet Homer (and others) through his epic poems, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The reason that The Trojan War is important to the overall picture is not a trivial one. The true story of the Trojan War has never been revealed to the general public, and yet, it is probably one of the most important stories in establishing the chronology herein proposed than any other in classical history.

Since the time setting of the Trojan War is within the Biblical period of the later Judges Gideon and Eli, it is, therefore, appropriate that we discuss this subject at this juncture. This will not only provide us with further insight into what was happening just prior to the Monarchical period of Israel but exactly who the Trojan people were descended from.

As the traditional story goes, according to Homer, the war was waged by the Greeks against the fort city of Troy as a result of the abduction of Queen Helen, wife of King Menelaus of Sparta, by a prince of Troy, Paris, son of King Priam. The enterprise resulted in a supposedly ten-year siege of the fortified city of Troy (1192-1182 BCE). King Agamemnon of Mycenae, along with his brother Menelaus, led an expedition to Troy in order to revenge Menelaus over this outrage. But if there really was a “Trojan War,” was the real reason for it because of the abduction of Helen? Let us here look at the “Trojan War” in a new light.

⁵⁷² This chapter was abbreviated in this volume to keep the page count down. The expanded version will be presented in volume 2.

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Who Were the Trojans?

We need to understand the true ethnic origins of who the Trojan people were descended from. The astonishing answer is that they were Israelites from the Tribe of Judah that came to the Troad 16 years after the Exodus. They were in fact fleeing Israelites from the House of Judah.

The story of the famous Trojan kings — once so widely discussed in Greek literature — is little known to history students today. It begins in the days of Jasius, or Jason, who became king of Celtica in 1601. The half-brother of Jasius is Dardanus, whom Josephus declares to be Darda or Dara (See II Chronicles 2:6 [*sic* “I Chronicles 2:6”]). Darda was of the House of Judah and the Trojan kings therefore were Jews! Following a quarrel Dardanus fled to Asia Minor, married the daughter of a native king, and founded the vital fort of Troy.

Thus the Trojan line of kings ... were able to dominate Western Asia Minor. The Trojans were generally supported by the Assyrians in all their wars against the Greeks.⁵⁷³

It is at this time that the Trojan (Judean) royalty founded the city of Illyrim in 1478 BCE,⁵⁷⁴ 15 years after the Exodus. Indeed, these “Jewish” descendants dominated the Dardanelles for a period of 296 years prior to the Greek victory in 1182 BCE, *i.e.*, from a period of 1478-1182 BCE.

The Trojan line of kings that reigned during this period is given in the following chart.

Early Kings of Troy from the Tribe of Judah⁵⁷⁵

Table 20:

| Name of King | Length of Reign | Date of Reign |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Dardanus | 65 | 1478-1413 |
| Erichthonius | 46 | 1413-1367 |
| Tros | 40 | 1367-1327 |
| Ilus | 49 | 1327-1278 |
| Laomedon | 44 | 1278-1234 |
| Priamus | 52 | 1234-1182 |
| Total | 296 | |

⁵⁷³ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:453.

⁵⁷⁴ We should note that not all of the Israelites that escaped Egypt at the Exodus followed Moses into the desert. Some 16 years after the Exodus a few enterprising Israelites from the noble tribe of Judah appropriated Egyptian sea vessels and went to Anatolia to establish colonies there. Not all Israelite slaves made bricks for building projects. Some were used to row Egyptian ships and knew the sea lanes well enough to expand into new territories for settlements.

⁵⁷⁵ The dates shown here were derived from an early chronologist, James Gordon (Jacobus Gordonus, 1553-1641), *Opus Chronologicum*, apud Joseph Scaliger (reference note says: *Scaliger, lib.1., Can. sabb [nouris annis probe confentir]*). The same list was also reported in Percy Enderbie, *Britain in its Perfect Lustre* (London: Printed for Andrew Crooke, *etc.*, 1661) [the author has an original copy], 13. Sir Isaac Newton also recognized the reign of these kings as totaling 296 years (*Chronology*, 136), but, unfortunately, did not reveal his sources. His argument was that the total of 296 years for 6 kings averaged of 49 1/3 years: “Chronologers reckon that the six last of these Kings Reigned 296 years, which is after the rate of 49 1/3 years a-piece one with another; and that they began in the days of Moses” (1573-1453 BCE).

The Jewish Royal Family of Troy

According to legend, when the Greeks finally burned down the city of Troy in 1182 BCE, the Royal Trojan family fled before their fate of being slaughtered. The family boarded their ships and wandered in exile until they finally came to Italy, where the royal Trojan prince, Aeneas,⁵⁷⁶ established a colony in Italy.⁵⁷⁷

Furthermore, Aeneas had a son called Ascanius, who in turn had a son named Brutus. The mother of this Brutus died in childbirth and in his teens he is said to have killed his father in a hunting accident. Both of these happenings were predicted by a sorcerer, who also predicted that Brutus would accomplish great deeds in his life. Nevertheless, because of these unfortunate deeds, Brutus was banished from the community and was forced to flee and escaped to Greece. While in Greece Brutus encountered his Trojan comrades, who had been enslaved there, as well as the Lydians and Maeonians, who were eager to find a champion for their cause and return to Troy to retake the city. From these fellow countrymen, Brutus raised a small band of insurgents that would return to Troy and reform an army of local partisans that could drive out the Greeks.

We must realize that at this time, Troy was no longer a great city as it was before the first Trojan War. It was now merely a garrison fort for the Greeks without any strong force. What is not known today is that there was no way that this small contingent of Greeks could stave off the Anatolians for very long. As we shall establish by the Sea Powers List it was only 32 years later by a sneak attack at night, that Brutus and his party were able to return to Troy and retake the city.

First, the Trojans overcame the Greek guards. Then they captured the commander of the fort, Pandrasus. Brutus next forced Pandrasus into a treaty that would set the Trojans free and return the fort back to them. Pandrasus agreed to the terms. Indeed, he even gave Brutus his daughter, Ignoge, in marriage. Without getting into the details, Brutus, with his fellow Trojans decided to migrate to the west with those who wished to join him in his ventures to Albion, which he duly renamed after himself — Britain.⁵⁷⁸

Early British chroniclers record that a Trojan ruler named Brutus came from the Eastern Mediterranean with hundreds of ships to colonize ancient Britain, and that he gave it the name “Briton” or “Britannia.” An approximate date for this event is 1103 B.C. [*sic!* 1149 BCE]. Although Brutus is attributed a Trojan ancestry in the ancient accounts, he bore the Hebrew word **B-R-T** in his name (Brutus), and applied the same Hebrew word (**B-R-T**) to the British Isles. That a Trojan leader bore an important Hebrew root word in his name provides evidence that Israelites were present among the inhabitants of ancient Troy.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁶ Aeneas was a Jew in every sense of the word. He was the son of Anchises and was, therefore, a direct descendant of Judah, as has been explained above in previous discussions.

⁵⁷⁷ Classical historians, such as Virgil, reported that Aeneas (it will be shown later on) was the ancestor of the legendary Romulus and Remus. His father was a first cousin of King Priam of Troy (both being grandsons of Ilus, founder of Troy), making Aeneas a second cousin to Priam's children (such as Hector and Paris). He is a character in Greek mythology and is mentioned in Homer's *Iliad*. Aeneas received full treatment in Roman mythology, most extensively in Virgil's *Aeneid*, where he is cast as an ancestor of Romulus and Remus. He became the first true hero of Rome. Snorri Sturluson identifies him with the Norse Æsir Vidarr.

⁵⁷⁸ The story of Brutus and the ancient history of Britain must await a future volume.

⁵⁷⁹ Steven M. Collins, *Israel's Lost Empires* (Royal Oak, Mich.: Bible Blessings, 2003), 51. See also Collins' references.

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Not only was Brutus an Israelite from the tribe of Judah, he was directly descended from the royal line of Darda, son of Judah, which makes him a Jew. This startling revelation means that the ancient Britons were, in fact, “Jews.”

The Lydians and Maeonians remained in Anatolia and became the first great Sea Power on the list of Thalassocracies, dating to the year of 1149 BCE. Thus, that year was the very year that the Greeks were defeated in a second Trojan war that modern scholars do not recognize, and is the reason why the Lydians and Maeonians became the first Sea Power to defeat the Greeks.⁵⁸⁰

The Importance of Troy

In order to understand the true significance of the sack of Troy, we must brush away the mythological elements of Homer’s narrative in order to see behind his romantic embellishments.

Troy had become a very important transit lane of the Bosphorus Straits to the Black Sea, viz., the Hellespont. Troy, therefore, became an important stop-off point where mostly Greek sailors could refresh themselves, have wine, women, and song, so to speak, before starting again the strenuous rowing northeast against the strong currents and the steady northeastern headwinds of this dangerous straight. That is the picture that we can only imagine given the topography of what exists today.

Troy was also a place where ships could be resupplied, refurbished, and repaired before moving onto the Black Sea and back. And these ships, mostly from Greece, needed to get the vital food supplies of wheat and other commodities from the Black Sea regions; the main reasons for their expeditions in the first place. This was the vibrant commerce of western Anatolia in the twelfth century BCE.

The Black Sea was a busy waterway on the crossroads of the ancient world: the Balkans to the West, the Eurasian steppes to the north, Caucasus and Central Asia to the East, Asia Minor and Mesopotamia to the south, and Greece to the south-west.

The oldest processed gold in the world, arguably left by Old Europeans, was found in Varna, and the Black Sea was supposedly sailed by the Argonauts. The land at the eastern end of the Black Sea, Colchis, (now Georgia), marked for the Greeks the edge of the known world.⁵⁸¹

However, meanwhile back in Egypt, the reality was that this was a time of the despotic rule of the Hyksos period during the reign of Apophis II of Dynasty 15. The Egyptian people were now in fact poor and enslaved by the conquering Hyksos oppressors. This was a time in Egyptian history that was the poorest of any time that the ancient Egyptians ever experienced. It was a time where Egypt had been devastated by the plagues of the Exodus. Present-day historians want you to believe

⁵⁸⁰ Prior to the Greeks taking Troy in 1182/1 BCE, we have the stories of Minos and his son Deucalion controlling the isles of the Aegean. But in actuality, these were Cretans — not Greeks. Some believe that the Pelasgians were a Greek tribe. They were not, as has been shown. They were from the Israelite tribe of Judah. The Lesbians and Phocaeans are considered today to be a part of ancient Greece. However, it was Herodotus who said that “These Phocaeans were the earliest of the Greeks to make long sea-voyage (Herodotus, *The Histories*, 1:163). If that is true, that the Phocaeans were considered to be Greeks in Herodotus’ time, then that would at least confirm the fact that the Greeks lost their power over the seas until the year of 578 BCE under the guise of the Phocaeans. But that would also mean that all Sea Powers listed above the Phocaeans must also be considered as non-Greek.

⁵⁸¹ Wikipedia: “Black Sea” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Sea, accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

is that this was the glorious time of the so-called “New Kingdom.” Such a laughable notion is utter and total nonsense! The Greek historians never even mentioned Egypt during this time period.

But alas, back in Canaan where the Israelites re-established their ancient homeland, it was also a very poor period of the so-called Middle Bronze Age and the time of the Judges.

In western Anatolia, however, it was a far different story. Anatolia at that time witnessed a great time of prosperity and wealth. And what was the reason for that posterity? Troy! Indeed, it was because of the vital fort of Troy that the surrounding areas also flourished greatly from trade passing through that principal straight. But how did the Trojans benefit from this commerce? Obviously, the Trojans must have extolled an exorbitant tax on the ships that passed through this vital sea pass.

Also, the Trojans must have realized that their situation could not last long unless they took their wealth and took precautions to fortify their walls against attack. Furthermore, the Trojans must have had enough military resources from the indigenous surrounding population in order to resist any attack on its hold on this important port of commerce.

So, as far as the Greeks were concerned, they desperately needed the grain supplies that fed the Greek population from the areas that surrounded the Black Sea. But on the other hand, the only way that the Greek merchant vessels, and other peoples of those times, could get to these regions was through the Dardanelles. Obviously, the Trojans blocked passage to any ship passing through those straights, unless they paid a toll to do so. In other words, the Trojans acted as if they owned the waters of the Dardanelle straights. The Greeks finally had enough of this outrageous Trojan extortion. This tensioning situation finally needed to be alleviated by the Greeks. And this was accomplished by the first Trojan War.

Thus, let us be clear; we have to understand that the main reason that the Greeks finally waged war with the Trojans was not due to the retrieval of Helen, but as usual, an economic reason. The Greeks needed to gain control of the Bosphorus Straits in order to not be exorbitantly extorted for their commercial traffic through those straights. The time had come to not only put an end to this Trojan extortion but to be in control of the straights themselves and take over this source of revenue from the Trojans.

Even the fifth century BCE historian, Herodotus, understood this fact where he even stated:

Had Helen really been in Troy, she would have been handed over to the Greeks with or without Paris’ consent; for I cannot believe that either Priam or any other kinsman of his was mad enough to be willing to risk his own and his children’s lives and the safety of the city, simply to let Paris continue to live with Helen.⁵⁸²

Homer’s *Iliad* described the final battle in the last year of the first Trojan War. Most likely, the war only lasted only three years, *i.e.*, 1184-1182 BCE.⁵⁸³

And how was it possible for the Trojans to have held off the Greeks, who are said to have launched a thousand ships for their enterprise, not to have taken the small fort of Troy after a long siege of several years. Well, for one, the Trojans certainly had the upper hand in the land advan-

⁵⁸² Herodotus, *The Histories*, 2:120.

⁵⁸³ Thus, the date of 1184 BCE for the Trojan War, derived from Eratosthenes, appears to have been counted from the beginning of the war, rather than the end of it. Finally, after the Trojan Horse ruse, the city finally fell in 1182/1 BCE, according to Eusebius.

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tage. But more importantly, they undoubtedly had aid from a number of allies who supported their economic endeavor.

Troy had assembled a grand coalition. Some of the alliances from Europe — Thrace and Macedonia — but most were Anatolian. Alliances were the bread and butter of Anatolian politics, and many figure in Hittite texts, so Homer's list of Troy's Anatolian partners is historically plausible.⁵⁸⁴

After the Trojans were defeated, a number of their royal family fled to other parts of the world and established new dynasties elsewhere. Aeneas, son of the prince Anchises, who was second cousin of King Priam of Troy, fled to Italy and founded Lavinium as his capital.

Another son of Aeneas was Brutus, who ended up in Greece with the enslaved Trojans and Lydians. He reorganized these people to return back to Troy and retake it from the Greeks in 1149 BCE.⁵⁸⁵ But Brutus did not wish to remain in Troy. He thereupon migrated, with a band of Trojan loyalists, next to the far West and settled in the Island that still bears his name (Britain) and established there a long line of British kings.

Those who remained in Troy were the Lydians and Maeonians, who maintained control of Western Anatolia for the next 92 years (1149-1057 BCE). Indeed, they are listed as becoming a major Sea Power in their own right.⁵⁸⁶

Why No Records of a Second Trojan War

The second Trojan war was never discussed by ancient Greek historians (and therefore oblivious to modern historians). Why? Obviously, because it was a Greek defeat. So, in the first Trojan War, the Greeks were the victors. They then finally became the possessors of this vital (now known as the Bosphorus) straight. But, in actuality, that victory was short-lived. In the second Trojan War, the Greeks lost to a grand coalition from the Anatolian peninsula from all sides. Once Troy was regained by the Lydian/Maeonian coalition, they then became the new dominant Sea Power for only 32 years in the eastern Mediterranean — no longer controlled by the Greeks!⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸⁴ Barry Strauss, *The Trojan War: A New History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007), 54.

⁵⁸⁵ This date will be established as we move along.

⁵⁸⁶ So, it would seem, that the criteria for control of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea Powers was in fact, who was in control of the Dardanelles-Bosphorus Straits, viz., the Hellespont.

⁵⁸⁷ It is so interesting that the Sea Powers list begins with the Lydian/Maeonian coalition in 1149 BCE, skipping over the famous Greek victory over the Trojans in 1182/1 BCE. With this exclusion, the Greeks were eliminated as being a Sea Power for a period of 669 years, from 1149 to 480 BCE, and deprived the Greeks of their dominance of the eastern Mediterranean after the defeat of Troy in 1149 BCE.

CHAPTER 10

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN “SEA POWERS” LIST

*T*HE NOTED GREEK HISTORIAN, DIODORUS SICULUS (CA 90 BCE - 30 BCE), HAD preserved one of the most important documents towards the study of ancient chronology to come down to us from ancient times (besides the Bible itself!). This list is what has become known as “The Sea Powers List.”⁵⁸⁸ But true to form, hardly any modern-day scholar ever mentions this extremely important document.⁵⁸⁹

It is here now time to open up this hidden treasure and shine the light on its amazing value to the entire subject of ancient world chronology — not just only Biblical chronology. And what is

⁵⁸⁸ The so-called “List of Thalassocracies” has been passed down to us from the preserved works of the early Catholic Church historian Eusebius (ca. 240-360 CE), first published in modern times in *Eusebii Chronicorum*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1866-1875). Eusebius was a meticulous historian who used numerous ancient reliable sources, many of which are today lost to us, including Berossos, Alexander Polyhistor, Abydenus, Castor of Rhodes, Diodorus, Cephalaon of Gergis, Manetho, Porphyrius, and many more, plus various other translations of the sacred text that have come down to us from the very important library of Caesarea. In order to appreciate the importance of this extremely important document, one must seriously study the modern research of John L. Meyers, “On the ‘List of Thalassocracies’ in Eusebius,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 26:1 (1906): 84-130 and 27:1 (1907): 12 ff.; J. K. Fotheringham’s reply to Meyers’ article, “On the ‘List of Thalassocracies’ in Eusebius (Continued),” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 27:1 (1906): 75-89. See also Rudolf Helm, “Liste der Thalassocratie in Eusebius’ Chronik,” *Hermes* 61 (1926), 241 ff.; Arnaldo Momigliano, “Sea-Power in Greek Thought,” *The Classical Review*, 58:1 (May 1944): 1-7; Thomas J. Figueira, *Excursions in Epichoric History: Aeginetan Essays* (Lanham, Md., [Rowman and Littlefield], 1993), 48-9; P. de Souza, “Towards Thalassocracy? Archaic Greek Naval Developments,” in *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence*, ed. N. Fisher and H. Van Wees (London: Routledge, 1998), 271-93.

⁵⁸⁹ The reason that modern historians ignore the “Sea Powers” document is plainly obvious. It is because, first of all, many modern scholars simply do not know such a list exists. Obviously, if they did, why do they not mention it in their writings?; 2) had scholars been aware of such a list they would have had no choice but to sweep it under the rug because it is a devastating indictment against the Generally Accepted Dates that they toil under. It is for this reason that this chapter must be included in this volume. It finally shines a light on one of the most significant documents in all of ancient history to truly restore ancient chronology to its proper place.

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found in this important list, independent of what the Bible reveals, is the fact that it confirms Biblical chronology to an amazing exactitude. Indeed, it is undoubtedly one of the major secular supports for the entire chronological reconstruction proposed herein.

This list was transmitted through Eusebius (ca. 240-360 CE). It is a list of the dominant Sea Powers of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea Powers commencing at the end of the second Trojan War. According to Eusebius, the list ended with the Persian King Xerxes’ abortive attempt to invade Greece, firmly dated to the year of 480 BCE by all ancient and modern historians. A. R. Burn explains:

The chronologist Eusebius quotes from Diodôrus of Sicily a list of “those who ruled the sea, from the fall of to Xerxes’ crossing into Europe.” Diodôrus must have given the list somewhere in the lost “second volume” (books VI to X) of the forty-book *History of the World*; these books covered precisely the epoch to which the List refers. He presumably got his information from the *History of Sea-Power* of his contemporary, Kastor of Rhodes, the only Greek study of the subject of which we know. The probability is strengthened by the fact that our list concerns itself with Levantine waters only, ignoring the west and such powers as Corinth, Korkyra, Carthage; for Kastor was an orientalist who also (as Suidas tells us) wrote a *History of Babylon*.⁵⁹⁰

This “Sea Powers” list covered an extensive period of time — a total of 669 years. It supposedly began with the second fall of Troy. But if the list ended in the year of 480 BCE, that would place the Second Fall of Troy in the year of 1149 BCE. Yet, Eusebius elsewhere placed the Fall of Troy in 1182 BCE,⁵⁹¹ some 32 years earlier.

So, now the question is: how could Eusebius himself be confused about these events that he reported? He wasn’t confused at all! The year 1149 BCE was indeed a date when the fort of Troy fell. But here is the amazing revelation of this list. What is revealing is that this “Fall of Troy” was not the first Fall of Troy in 1182 BCE. It clearly indicates a second Fall of Troy (completely ignored by modern historians). The list begins with the Lydians and Maeonians. Indeed, the Lydians included the ancient Trojans. That means that the Trojan/Lydian/Maeonian coalition was able to come back 32 years later and retake Troy from the Greeks. And that is a point of fact that you will never read in any modern history book.

The next logical question is: why isn’t the fact of a second Trojan War ever mentioned in the Greek annals? The answer is obvious. The Greek historians were deliberately silent about the Second Trojan War because no Greek historian would dare write about an ignominious Greek defeat, only 32 years after their glorious victory over the Trojans in 1182 BCE?

The reason that the Greeks could not hold Troy any longer than three decades is for one, the area had been devastated and the city of Troy was no longer fortified as it once was. And secondly, the vast

⁵⁹⁰ A. R. Burn, *Minoans, Philistines, and Greeks, B.C. 1400-900* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), 56. Burn, not understanding that the list begins with the Second Trojan War, mis-dates the list by 32 years too early. He also reverses the Phrygians with the Rhodians and adds an extra year to the Cyprians, producing an erroneous date for the Phoenician hegemony of 835-790 BCE. The corrected date should be 813-768 BCE. The dating followed herein is that done by the critical work of J. K. Fotheringham (“On the List of Thalassacracies in Eusebius,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 27 (1907): 68-89). Redford (*Ancient Times*, 345) noted: “while these lists are uneven in historical worth, they often preserve a curious kernel of truth.” Whatever Redford means as to the list being “uneven in historical worth” is never explained. But of course, from his perspective, he has no choice but to be dismissive as to this list being a historical bombshell that contradicts his point of view of ancient history.

⁵⁹¹ See *Jerome’s Chronicle Being Eusebius’ Chronicle, Part II* (Chronological Tables/Canons), translated from Latin by Roger Pearse (online at <http://www.attalus.org/armenian/Jerome.htm>, accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

region of western Anatolia was inhabited by enemies of the Greeks that far outnumbered the Greek garrison that was holding down that fort. It wasn't until the year of 677 BCE that the Greeks were finally able to retake Troy in what we could call a Third Trojan War. This was shortly before the time of Homer and right at the very time that the Lydian King, Gyges (716-678 BCE) had died.⁵⁹²

Notice carefully that the Greeks launched their attack just one year after the death of Gyges. The loss of this powerful leader in the region, King Gyges of Lydia, is no doubt the reason that the Greeks the following year were emboldened to launch a third war on Troy. This third battle for Troy is why the memory of a Greek victory at Troy was still vivid in the minds of Greeks in Homer's day (who lived shortly thereafter). But Homer confused many of the facts of the recent Trojan War with the original one some five centuries earlier.

It is time that this list be presented as a very important exhibit to what few in this world have ever seen in any chronological discussion by other authors.⁵⁹³

⁵⁹² Sir William Smith, *A Classical Dictionary* (London: John Murray, 1899), 326. Homer (*Iliad*, 2:977), mentioned the Nymph of Lake Gyges, (quoted from *Homer: The Iliad*, trans. Robert Fagles, [New York: Penguin Books, 1991], 127).

⁵⁹³ With the exception of Herman L. Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:407-410.

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The Ancient Sea Powers (Thalassocracies) of the Eastern Mediterranean

Table 21:

| No. | Sea Power | Duration (years) | Dates (BCE) |
|-----|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 1 | Lydians, <i>i.e.</i> , Maeonians | 92 | 1149-1057 |
| 2 | Pelasgians or “Sea Peoples” | 85 | 1057-972 |
| 3 | Thracians | 79 | 972-893 |
| 4 | Rhodians | 23 | 893-870 |
| 5 | Phrygians | 25 | 870-845 |
| 6 | Cyprians | 32 | 845-813 |
| 7 | Phoenicians | 45 | 813-768 |
| 8 | Egyptians | 43 | 768-725 |
| 9 | Milesians | 18 | 725-707 |
| 10 | Carians | 61 | 707-646 |
| 11 | Lesbians | 68 | 646-578 |
| 12 | Phocaeans | 44 | 578-534 |
| 13 | Samians | 17 | 534-517 |
| 14 | Lacedemonians | 2 | 517-515 |
| 15 | Naxians | 10 | 515-505 |
| 16 | Eritreans | 15 | 505-490 |
| 17 | Aeginetans | 10 | 490-480 |
| | Total | 669 years | |

We need not comment on the later nations in this list that are generally accepted as being confirmed by later Greek historians. It is the earlier part of this list that is in contention by modern scholars.

The important thing to understand about this list is that it begins with the Lydians. This is a vital key to understanding the history of this time. Indeed, it not only vindicates the chronology of the Bible exactly as brought out herein, but it finally restores ancient Greek history to its proper place. Therefore, we begin with this question; who were the Lydians?

Who Were the Lydians?

The term “Lydia” (Greek, *Lydii*) was a latter Greek term which they applied to the area where ancient Troy once stood. But in reality, the term “Lydia” was originally derived from the table of nations in Genesis 10. “Lud” was a son of Shem, son of Noah (Gen 10:22; 1 Chr 1:17).⁵⁹⁴ So, when the “list” begins with the later term “Lydians,” it also connects them with a people known as Maeonians. Indeed, this is a term that must have been in use at the time of the First and Second Trojan wars. It was the Maeonians who first settled in the area where later Lydia once stood.

And who were the Maeonians? Does the Bible give us a clue? Yes, indeed it does! Realize that by Biblical chronology we are in the time of the Judges. The first Trojan War occurred in the nineteenth year of Gideon (1182 BCE). And when that strong leader died 21 years later in 1161 BCE, everything seemed to fall apart in Israel. In Judges at this very same time we read:

After Abimelech, Tola son of Puah, son of Dodo, rose to deliver Israel. He belonged to Issachar and lived at Shamir in the mountain country of Ephraim. He was judge in Israel for twenty-three years; he then died and was buried at Shamir (Judg 10:1).

We have already established that Tola was Judge from 1168-1145 BCE. In other words, Tola died four years after the Second Trojan War which occurred in 1149 BCE. Then a few verses down in the very same context we read:

So the Israelites cried to the Lord, saying, “We have sinned against you, because we have abandoned our God and have worshiped the Baals.” And the Lord said to the Israelites, “Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the Philistines? The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the **MAONITES**, oppressed you; and you cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand (Judg 10:10-12, author’s emphasis).

So, who were the Biblical “Maonites” that existed at the time of the Second Trojan War? Well, you can consult every Bible dictionary there is and not find one of them that has identified the Biblical Moanites with the Maeonians, who settled in what was later called “Lydia.”⁵⁹⁵ Why? Because most scholars are either ignorant of the testimony of the “Sea Powers List,” or they would rather not discuss it, nor acknowledge its implications. But obviously, it is no small leap to see that the “Maonites” were indeed the “Maeonians” mentioned directly in the Sea Powers list.

So here, in the exact same context with the time of the Israelite Judge Tola (1168-1145 BCE), who lived at the same time period as the Second Trojan War (1149 BCE), is a clear connection with the Biblical “Maonites.” This is amazing proof of the Biblical chronology advanced herein and just another clue that the “Sea Powers List” is a vital key in solidifying the chronology we have thus far established. The timing is exact to the very year once we get the overall chronology right.

But the biggest surprise in this list is identifying who were the “Pelasgians”? This mysterious people have puzzled historians down through the ages. They were not some obscure Greek tribe. The answer is one of the most amazing identifications in all of ancient history. Let’s see why.

⁵⁹⁴ Another “Lud” is also reported in the Hebrew text. In Gen 10:13 and 1 Chr 1:11, a son of Mizraim [Egypt], son of Ham, son of Noah. The Luddite warriors mentioned in an oracle concerning Egypt were those of Cush (Ethiopia) and Put (Libya; Jer 46:9) and points to the Ludim son of Mizraim.

⁵⁹⁵ We should remember that when Troy fell in 1182/1 BCE and again in 1149 BCE, the term “Lydia” as a distinct nation did not yet exist.

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Who Were the Pelasgians?

Now here is where the rubber finally meets the road. Do notice the significant dates of the Pelasgians that succeeded the “Lydians” as a Sea Power in this list. The dates are from 1057- 972 BCE. The fact that these dates exactly coincide with the Biblical dates that have been established so far herein is the most amazing discovery of all time in the history of Biblical chronology. The reason is that once Biblical chronology is correctly established, then everything else falls perfectly into place. We have already seen the astonishing fact that none of the nations on the list were Greeks, except for possibly the Pelasgians. But were the Pelasgians really Greeks? Dionysius informs us:

... for the Pelasgians, too, were a Greek nation originally from the Peloponnesus. ... They received their name originally from Pelasgus, their king. Pelasgus was the son of Zeus, it is said, and of Niobê the daughter of Phoroneus, who, as the legend goes, was the first mortal woman Zeus had knowledge of. In the sixth generation afterwards, leaving the Peloponnesus, they removed to the country which was then called Haemonia and now Thessaly.⁵⁹⁶

The Pelasgians that Dionysius was describing here could not be the Pelasgians in the list of Thalassocracies since Phoroneus (as will be shown in volume two of this series) reigned from 1802-1742 BCE, some five centuries before the First Trojan War — far removed from the time period of the Thalassocracies list. The name “Pelasgians” in the list doesn’t fit that timeline at all. What is going on here is a deliberate subterfuge by the Greeks as to who these people really were. Let us understand.

The Greek historians, realizing that the Greeks were deprived of having Greece proper to lead the list of Sea Powers from the First Trojan War, obscured the second Sea Power as some vague people known as “Pelasgians.” But they were not the original ancient “Pelasgian” Greeks at all. The fact of the matter is that these so-called “Pelasgians” were actually the Israelite/Tyrian alliance during the time of the Monarchies of King David, King Solomon, and Hiram, the King of Tyre.

The Lydian Sea Power came to an end in 1057 BCE, which had dominated the Eastern Mediterranean for nearly a century since the Second Trojan War. We should now ask, what is significant about that year in Biblical Chronology? It turns out that the year 1057 BCE is the very exact year that marked the death of King Saul, and the accession of King David. What an astonishing agreement with Biblical and secular history! Indeed, consider the fact that in the very same year that the Lydian Sea Power, which had dominated the Eastern Mediterranean for nearly a century since the Second Trojan War now gave way to what Diodorus called the Pelasgian alliance which was non-other than the partnership of Israel and Tyre.

The Sea Powers (or Thalassocracies) which were preserved by Diodorus *apud* Eusebius (and discussed elsewhere herein) has the Lydian domination from 1149-1057 BCE and the Pelasgians from 1057-972 BCE. So, everything fits exactly once we get the chronology right. The fact that the beginning of the Pelasgian Sea Power began (1057 BCE) was the exact year that King David came to power and the year 972 BCE was the exact year that Shishak’s armies invaded Israel, ending the Pelasgian dominance in the Mediterranean, cannot possibly be just a matter of coincidence.

Obviously, the later Greek historians could not bear having the ancient Hebrews as being dominant of the Eastern Mediterranean, so they disguised the Phoenicia/Israel alliance as being

⁵⁹⁶ Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Roman Antiquities*, 17:2-3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, [Loeb Classical Library 319], 1937), 1:55, 57.

some proto-Greek tribe that they borrowed from Homer. Yet, if the Pelasgians were not the Phoenicians in league with the Hebrews, then the Phoenicians would be absent from this list right when they were the most dominant Sea Power on the Mediterranean Ocean at that time! Does that inconsistency make any sense at all? Indeed, if the Phoenicians were absent from this list right at their peak of ancient Mediterranean maritime history, then that would make no sense.

Also, consider the fact that the Pelasgians were also identified in the list as a “Peoples of the Sea”. Yet, modern-day scholars have attributed that term to what they want to believe were the “Philistine” people. But make no mistake, in no way were the ancient Philistines a “Peoples of the Sea.”⁵⁹⁷ The Philistines were indigenous people of Canaan even before the time of Abraham.

Who Were the “Phoenicians”?

Have modern scholars, or students of ancient history, ever asked this serious question: “Was there ever an ancient nation or kingdom called by the name of ‘Phoenicia’?” Good question! The answer is that

...there never was a country or empire called ‘Phoenicia’ ... they spoke of themselves as Tyrians, Sidonians. ... and so on. The very word ‘Phoenician’ was unknown to them; the label ... was pasted on them by the Greeks and preserved by the accident that the Greek language and its literature, and not the Phoenician, have been passed down to us.⁵⁹⁸

Okay then, so who exactly were these so-called “Phoenician” people? It is this author’s belief that they were actually Israelites, originally from the tribe of Dan. The reason for this conclusion is that the Bible states that it was the Tribe of Dan that had the reputation of abiding in ships (Judges 5:17). Indeed, that notoriety identifies the Israelite tribe of Dan as a real “Sea People.”⁵⁹⁹

The time of the so-called Pelasgian Sea Power occurred is at the very same time that the Davidic/Solomonic era brought in the greatest wealth and literature in the history of not only Israel, but of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and the entire known world. But modern scholarship has decreed that this period of time in Israelite history was the poor Iron Age. This is not history. This is total nonsense. And because of this false belief, based on a false chronology of Egypt, modern scholars question the very existence of King David and King Solomon. It is a deliberate attempt by modern scholarship to discredit the Biblical record of its true history. Yet the Bible affirms that in the time of King David, Israel’s influence extended from Egypt to Mesopotamia (1 Chr 18:3). King David’s Kingdom was the mightiest kingdom on earth at that time, with an army of 1,570,00 soldiers (1 Chr 21:1-17).

Indeed, King Solomon amassed gold from far-off places (most likely the Yucatan Peninsula) that took his ships three years to return. Thus, the year 1057 BCE ushered in a new Golden Age of prosperity and literature⁶⁰⁰ that spilled over into the entire Mediterranean ocean and beyond. In Egypt the “Dark Age” of the Hyksos period came to an end and the so-called lavish “New King-

⁵⁹⁷ Who the Philistines really were will be discussed shortly in an upcoming chapter.

⁵⁹⁸ Maitland Edey, *The Sea Traders* (New York: Time Life Books, 1974), 9-10.

⁵⁹⁹ The Tribe of Dan, and their Phoenician cousins, learned how to build ships passed down by to them by the Ark builder himself, Noah. After the Flood Noah and Shem built ships to relocate their descendants to the far reaches of the earth.

⁶⁰⁰ The famous Hammurabi of the first dynasty of Babylon is grossly mis-dated by modern historians as will be shown in volume 2 of this series. He flourished during the time of Solomon’s Golden age — in no way seven centuries earlier.

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dom” emerged. And it all came about because of Solomon’s greatness — not anything that Egypt nor the rest of the Mediterranean had achieved.

The fact that the Pelasgian Sea Power began with the beginning of the reign of King David (to the very year!) and ended in the fifth year of Rehoboam — again, exactly to the year that Shishak brought an end to the maritime wealth of Israel — is so precise that it undoubtedly can only mean that the Pelasgians in the Sea Powers list must represent, not some obscure Homeric Greek tribe, but only the Israel/Phoenician alliance according to the Biblical dates presented herein.

We need to come to grips with the fact that King Solomon (1017-977 BCE) of Israel was in fact a contemporary with King Hiram of Tyre (1025-991 BCE).⁶⁰¹ We should remember that Hiram had helped Solomon with his building projects, sending him timber from the cedars of Lebanon.⁶⁰²

At this time in ancient history, the Phoenicians already had a long reputation of being a “Sea People.”⁶⁰³ Strabo wrote:

... the Phoenicians, who, a short time after the Trojan War, explored the regions beyond the Pillars of Heracles and founded cities both there and in the central parts of the Libyan sea-board.⁶⁰⁴

Most scholars agree from the Biblical texts that Solomon must have gone up the coast of Africa (or even India), since he brought back silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys (1 Kgs 10:22). But the gold that he brought back was from a land called Ophir (1 Kgs 9:26-28). Therefore, we have to legitimately ask, was Africa the land of Ophir? And did it really have a gold coast? This question was explored by the Phoenician scholar, Sabatino Moscati, and the answer was an emphatic “no!”⁶⁰⁵

The “Pillars of Heracles” were long noted as the Rock of Gibraltar of today, the gateway to the Atlantic Ocean from the Mediterranean Sea. And if the Phoenicians founded cities far beyond the Rock of Gibraltar into the Atlantic Ocean, where could they have possibly been other than the Americas?

Indeed, if Solomon’s ships took three years to return, are we talking about a ride down the coast of Africa and back? Hardly! Solomon’s ships did not bring back gold from Africa, but from the Yucatan Peninsula, noted for its wealth in gold from the time of the Spanish ships that brought much gold and silver from that area of Mexico.

The legendary Atlantis was elucidated by Plato:

In his *Timaeus*, Plato tells [us of the legendary continent] of Atlantis: a vast island west of the Pillars of Hercules, **larger than Africa and Asia combined**, about which Solon, while visiting the Nile Delta, had learned from an Egyptian priest. ... Because of its presence voyagers could cross the Atlantic Ocean: from Europe or Africa to Atlantis, thence westward to other islands and finally to a real continent.⁶⁰⁶

⁶⁰¹ Those dates overlapped from 1017 - 991 = 26 years.

⁶⁰² 1 Kgs 5:8-9.

⁶⁰³ It was the ancient Phoenicians that had a long reputation of being a “Sea People” in the Mediterranean. Indeed, it was the Phoenicians who ruled the Mediterranean seas going back from around 1500 BCE. But there never was a time when the “Philistines” were identified in ancient literature as a “Sea People.” The Philistines were an indigenous peoples of Canaan going back to the time of Abraham. The “Sea Powers List” never mentioned Philistines as ever being a “Sea People.” Critical minds must let that sink in and treat that information as an indictment of the generally accepted chronology.

⁶⁰⁴ Strabo, *Geography* 1:3:2, tr. Horace Leonard Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, [Loeb Classical Library 319], 1937), 1:177.

⁶⁰⁵ Around the year of 425 BCE, the Carthaginian Hanno launched a mission along the coast of West Africa in an effort to quest for the legendary gold of King Solomon, but alas found nothing. See Sabatino Moscati, *The World of the Phoenicians* (New York & Washington, D.C.: Praeger, 1968), 184.

King Solomon completed the building projects of the Temple and royal palace in the 20th year of his reign (997 BCE). At that point in time, he built a new fleet of heavy cargo ships at Ezion Geber to explore the world and gather the wealth of those far-flung regions. He then again solicited the aide of his ally, King Hiram of Tyre, to engage in a joint enterprise to explore the far reaches of the Atlantic Ocean and bring back its wealth. Solomon provided the port and the ships; Hiram provided the experienced sea mariners to navigate the oceans. The arrangement was perfect.

However, according to Greek legend, Atlantis supposedly fell beneath the sea. But the reality is that what actually fell beneath the proverbial “sea” was not a physical island landmass, but the knowledge of how to navigate to the remote western continents of the Americas and the secrets of where Solomon’s wealth in gold came from. It was the Israel/Phoenician Thalassocracy that knew the sea lanes to that secret continent of Atlantis. Once this carefully guarded secret of the sea lanes was lost to the world, it was tantamount to “Atlantis” sinking into a sea of oblivion. And that knowledge remained a lost secret until Christopher Columbus discovered the “New World” 25 centuries after the Israelite/Phoenician coalition collapsed.

After the collapse of the Pelasgian Sea Power in 972 BCE, then the Thracians became the new controllers of the Bosphorus Straits. Thrace was on the opposite side of the Dardanelles across from Troy. The Thracians had been allied with the Trojan/Lyidian alliance before the Israelite/Phoenician alliance (Pelasgians).⁶⁰⁷ And thus it appears that the Sea Powers list was in fact a list of which sea power controlled the Dardanelles from the time of the second fall of Troy in 1149 BCE.

The Reliability of the Sea Powers List

So, how reliable is the Sea Powers list? Well, consider that if the later part of the list is verified by modern scholars, then why, pray tell, would not the earlier part of the list be equally authentic? Maybe it is time that modern scholars re-evaluate this list as earlier scholars have done. The first modern study of note on the Sea Powers list was done by John L. Meyers in 1906. And here is what this important study concluded:

First, ... the lower part of the Thalassocracy List, as we have it now, corresponds in general, — and never positively conflicts — with the data of our only large fifth-century authority for early Greece, Herodotus: *second*; that its data as to the sequence of Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Egypt may be taken as literally exact; *third*, that the allusion to the Carians in Diodorus v. 84: supplies the clue to the original heading of the List, and also to the corrupt numerals which intervene between Phoenicia and Lacedaemon; and *fourth*, that, as the upshot of the whole enquiry, the Thalassocracy List is a mutilated but genuine document of approximately Periclean date, and embodies data which can be shown to be historically accurate far back into the latter half of the eighth century B.C.⁶⁰⁸

The Sea Powers of the later period has been verified with Herodotus and other ancient Greek sources.⁶⁰⁹ The real reason that scholars reject the earlier part of the list is if the facts were known,

⁶⁰⁶ Cyrus Gordon, *Before Columbus: Links Between the Old World and Ancient America* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1971), 43 (emphasis the author’s). So glad I got to hear Dr. Gordon speak at New York University in 1973.

⁶⁰⁷ Strauss, *Trojan War*, 54.

⁶⁰⁸ John L. Meyers, “On the ‘List of Thalassocracies’ in Eusebius,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (26:1, 1906): 130.

⁶⁰⁹ Eric W. Robinson, *Democracy Beyond Athens: Popular Government in the Greek Classical Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 232-33, only accepts the list from Samos on down because its dates roughly agree with the Polycratean era (534-517 BCE).

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it would prove that Israel and Hiram’s kingdom of Tyre, was what the Greeks disguised as the “Pelasgians.”

Professor Fotheringham, who reviewed Meyers’ outstanding work, concluded the following:

It is clear from the words in which the last Thalassocracy (that of the Aeginetans) is entered in the *Canons*, closing with ‘usque ad transitum Xerxis,’ that the list was meant to end with the expedition of Xerxes. ... If we wish to go behind Eusebius to his authorities, we must set aside the dates given above and concentrate our attention on the durations, and we must remember that the series ought to end, not in 475 B.C., but in 480 B.C., the true date of the expedition of Xerxes.⁶¹⁰

Notice that, curiously, nowhere in this list is it mentioned that the Greeks were ever a major Sea Power in the eastern Mediterranean during this period from 1057 to 668 BCE. This seems astonishing at first, but then, it would appear that the list only included those powers which were actually the nations who had enough sea power to control the Dardanelle’s, *i.e.*, Troy. After the year of 1149 BCE, the Greeks obviously no longer had control of the Eastern Mediterranean.⁶¹¹

As for the ancient Sea Powers list itself, it skips over the domination of the Greeks over Troy beginning in 1182 BCE. Why that is the case is a mystery. Rather, the list begins with the so-called “Lydians, *i.e.*, Maeonians.” These were the people who returned to take back Troy from the Greeks and who overcame the insufficiently defended fort of Troy by the Greek garrisons stationed there.⁶¹²

It appears that the very purpose of the Sea Power list was to demonstrate that not only were the Greeks defeated in the Second Trojan War in 1149 BCE, but that they lost control of the Eastern Mediterranean sea thereafter for a continuous period of 669 years when they finally defeated the Persians under Xerxes in 480 BCE. However, had this list started at the end of the Trojan War in 1182 BCE, the Greeks would have topped the list, for they controlled the straits for that short 33-year period, from 1182 BCE to 1149 BCE. Then, when it lists the “Lydians, *i.e.*, the Maeonians,” as the first Sea Power, it is actually stating that the first Sea Power of note were in fact the Trojans (Jews), Lydians, and Maeonians who reclaimed Troy in 1149 BCE.

Let us now go back and review the true chronology of the United Monarchy of Israel.

⁶¹⁰ Fotheringham, “Thalassacracies,” 84, 86.

⁶¹¹ Typically, the Trojan War was one of those chronological benchmarks (like the Olympic Games, or the Founding of Rome) that later historians used to date historical events. Maybe at one time the list did include the Greeks but were crossed off the list to hide the fact that in 32 years after their victory over Troy, the Greeks suffered a blistering defeat.

⁶¹² Lydia was where the latter Greek historians called the area of where Troy formerly stood. In other words, the list begins curiously, not with the victory of the Greeks over the city of Troy (and their allies) in 1182 BCE, but rather begins with the Greek defeat dated to the year of 1149 BCE.

CHAPTER 11

THE UNITED MONARCHY OF ISRAEL

*T*HE “UNITED MONARCHY” OF ISRAEL CONSISTED OF THREE KINGS, *viz.*, SAUL, DAVID, AND Solomon, and lasted for 120 years, each reigning for 40 years apiece. Although this seems suspicious to modern critics who view the exact number of 40 years as nothing short of a round number we have to accept the fact that in the entire scheme of Biblical chronology, this does not affect the overall chronological result, since we have the direct statement that from the Exodus to the fourth year of Solomon (1 Kgs 6:1), which secures the continuity of Biblical chronology.

Kings of Israel under the United Monarchy

Table 22:

| King | Reign | Years BCE | Years AM | Reference |
|---------|-------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| Saul | 40 | 1097-1057 | 2874-2914 | Acts 13:21; 1 Sam 13:1 ^a |
| David | 40 | 1057-1017 | 2914-2954 | 1 Kgs 15:2 |
| Solomon | 40 | 1017-977 | 2954-2994 | 1 Kgs 15:10 |

a. The text of 1 Samuel 13:1 literally reads “Saul was ... years old when he began to reign; and he reigned ... and two years over Israel.” Obviously, something has dropped out of the Masoretic Text. Some LXX versions drop this verse altogether, while others read: “Saul was [thirty and one] years old when he began to reign, and; he reigned [forty] and two years over Israel. It was the Apostle Paul who quoted a parallel source that allotted Saul 40 years (Acts 13:21). Since the Sea Powers List commences the Pelasgian period in 1057 BCE, which coincides with the reign of King David, it doesn’t matter whether King Saul had actually reigned 40 years or 42 years, so we will go with the statement of the Apostle Paul.

Objections to the Chronology of Israel Confronted

The only real problems standing in the way with the above dates are basically two secular scholarly objections: 1) Scholars typically ignore the Bible and tie the chronology of ancient Israel to the chronology of the Kingdom of Tyre and the founding of the ancient city of Carthage (accepted by Edwin R. Thiele, pointing to the year of 931 BCE for the division of the Kingdom)⁶¹³; and 2) Modern reconstructions of Assyrian chronology, especially that of Shalmaneser III, and the supposed date for the famous Battle of Qarqar.⁶¹⁴ A third possible objection is the fact that we ostensibly have three consecutive monarchs each reigning exactly 40 years apiece. What would be the likelihood of that? But is that impossible? No! Indeed, 40 is a very significant number in the Bible and typically represents a full generation.

The chronology of Tyre now is ready to be reexamined. It is believed by most scholars today that the chronology of Tyre is somehow superior to that of the Biblical record and should be how the chronology of the Divided Kingdom must be determined. But this is a ruse. In fact, not only is the modern reconstruction of Tyrian chronology wrong, but its reconstruction by modern scholars serves as an example of some of the most egregious scholarly reasoning of all time. It is for this reason that we must now address this problem and settle it once and for all. Let us see this matter as not only a chronological correction, but even more importantly, a glaring example of the kind of scholarship that should be condemned for its dishonesty.

⁶¹³ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 53.

⁶¹⁴ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 22.

CHAPTER 12

THE CHRONOLOGY OF TYRE

*M***OST** MODERN SCHOLARS TYPICALLY PUT THE BIBLICAL DATA CONCERNING ITS OWN chronology on the back burner and prefer to accept the reconstructed chronologies of other ancient nations to recreate what Israelite chronology should be. The chronology of Tyre is not only a case in point, but stands out as the most flagrant example of mischievous behavior on the part of scholarship. Therefore, this chapter, suddenly, becomes extremely important, not only for the correct understanding of the chronology of ancient Tyre, but must be addressed in order to demonstrate that it is a false assumption that the chronology of Tyre overthrows Biblical chronology.

Scholars who have attempted to use the chronology of Tyre to overthrow Biblical chronology are themselves guilty of what they criticize. The data that they use to overthrow Biblical chronology is not based on uncovered archaeological inscriptions, but by classical historians who had a wide disagreement concerning the foundation of Carthage. Since the dates proposed for the founding of Carthage have also been traditionally transmitted by a number of ancient classical historians, just like the Biblical scribes, then why are those traditions valid and the Biblical ones not?

The serious point that we need to consider in this chapter is the fact that the reconstructed chronology of Tyre is not some incidental matter that is detached from the subject of Biblical chronology. Modern scholars have used the chronology of Tyre in order to overthrow Biblical chronology, and that is why it is essential that we investigate this matter here and now in-depth.

One modern scholar, Gershon Galil, stated this opinion:

Rowton attempted to base Albright's Biblical chronology on the Tyrean chronology (M. B. Rowton, "The Date of the founding of Solomon's Temple," *BASOR* 119 [1950], 20-22), but his approach is basically flawed. The Tyrean chronology is mainly based on the data cited by Josephus in the name of Menander of Ephesus (see Liver, 190 and n. 5). Josephus provides two Tyrean-Israelite synchronisms: (1) the founding of the Temple of Solomon in the eleventh year (*Antiquities* 8:62) or in the twelfth year of Hiram I king of Tyre (*Against Apion*, 1:126); (2) the establishment of the Temple of Solomon 143 years and 8 months before the establishment of Carthage (*Against Apion*, loc. cit.). ... The question

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arises of the reliability of these data. Can they serve as the basis for the time of the schism and the chronology of the kings of Tyre? ... there is no basis for the claim by Albright and his school that the Tyrean chronology constitutes proof establishing the schism in 922.⁶¹⁵

Agreed! But the present author disagrees with Galil's assertion that the data of Josephus (and Menander who he cites) is "untrustworthy." If one is going to make such an assertion one must give reasons why. Galil gives none. William Hamilton Barnes also counters:

... the accuracy of Josephus' Tyrian data has been repeatedly questioned. ... Nevertheless, few would dispute the basic authenticity of Josephus' tradition, especially in the light of his own appeal to the "public records" to corroborate his polemic against the enemies forth Jews and his attempts to glorify the Jewish people.⁶¹⁶

Indeed, never has there been such a wide range of dates attested to by ancient authorities than the date for the founding of the city/state of Carthage. And we should also note that none of these various dates proposed for the founding of Carthage have ever been attested to by archaeology.⁶¹⁷

So, the main question that needs to be addressed here is why do modern scholars uncritically and selectively prefer certain testimony of some classical historians, but totally reject the testimony of the Masoretic tradition? Is this not a fair and credible question to ask in the debate? It definitely is!

What we are going to discover in this chapter is probably one of the most glaring misinterpretations in Biblical scholarship ever made concerning the chronology of the Tyre — indeed, in all of the chronology of the entire ancient Near Eastern history. That sums up just how serious this matter is to the overall subject. It is not just some kind of justifiable error that modern scholars have blundered into by selecting an arbitrary date for the fall of Carthage. By no means! It is a definite and deliberate deception upon an unsuspecting public which now must be exposed for what it is. It is entirely dumbfounding what a terrible subversion that scholars have made to justify their position and deceive an unsuspecting public in order to protect their honored chair.

The Founding of Carthage

The chronology of the Kings of Tyre and the founding of the Phoenician colony of Carthage in North Africa is traditionally constructed by modern-day scholars by certain synchronisms with King Solomon of Israel and King Hiram of Tyre, then by working through the succession of Tyrian kings in that king list supplied by the ancient Jewish historian, Josephus. Well, that all sounds well and good, but the only thing wrong here is that one must start with a reliable date for the foundation of Carthage in the first place. And herein lies the problem.

⁶¹⁵ Gershon Galil, *Chronology*, 15-16, fn. 8. It is not Josephus who is untrustworthy — but rather the historians cited in this article. The classical historians were all in disagreement with each other about the date of the founding of Carthage have been found to be untrustworthy in what they reported. That being the case, scholars just cannot go and pick whichever date they want in order to support their false ideas concerning the chronology of Tyre. Nevertheless, that is exactly what they have done.

⁶¹⁶ William Hamilton Barnes, *Studies in the Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel* (Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1991), 32, quoting Josephus, *Ag. Ap.*, 1:17 [§106-27] (Whiston, 780) (emphasis the author's).

⁶¹⁷ Noted scholars, such as William F. Albright, and his student John Bright, and others, such as Frank Moore Cross, Edwin R. Thiele, and William Hamilton Barnes, all have used various reconstructed chronologies of Tyre, as well as Egypt, and Assyria, as a basis to overthrow the chronology of the Bible. But in this chapter, we must specifically focus on the chronology of Tyre since it emerges as a major argument that somehow proves that the chronology of the Bible is in error. Yet, it is the Bible that establishes the chronology of Tyre — not the other way around!

The trustworthiness of this data, however, never seems to be challenged, nor critically called into question by modern scholars. And there seems to be a good reason why this data is never called into question. Modern scholars are certainly never going to accept the Masoretic tradition as true, so they have to come up with a plausible alternative of some sort.

Indeed, rather than working from the Masoretic material of Solomon's dates to establish the correct dates of the Tyrian kings (and from the known date of the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE) to establish the correct dates for Solomon's reign, scholars have decided to go in the opposite direction. They work backward from a "supposed" date for the founding of Carthage that was handed down to us from dubious sources to establish the year Carthage was founded, then work backward to establish the date of when King Hiram's dates synchronized with that of the dates of King Solomon.

In other words, they start from a position that basically postulates that the Biblical data is untrustworthy, so, therefore, it must be corrected by the testimony of ancient classical historians whose data is supposedly trustworthy. But guess what? We will see that the data that scholars rely upon is totally suspect. Indeed, such data cannot be tested by any modern unearthed archaeological evidence that supports any of the dates handed down to us by classical historians. So, the question is, why is the data of classical historians considered trustworthy, but the Biblical data not?

In order to appreciate the problem, let the scholar William Hamilton Barnes again explain it in the following quote:

Thus, if Josephus' data are trustworthy, we are able to compute the absolute date of the founding of Solomon's temple wholly independently of the disputed biblical chronological data of the Divided Monarchy of Israel, **provided only that we can ascertain with precision one more chronological datum — the date of the founding of Carthage** (emphasis mine).⁶¹⁸

What an honest acknowledgment! What Barnes brings out is certainly an important proviso that must be answered, isn't it? Indeed, how can we be sure that the date for the founding of Carthage chosen by modern scholars from the various testimonies of classical historians is the correct choice? It is impossible to move forward with any assurance unless that choice can be made with assurance.

The Real Date for the Founding of Carthage

The founding of Carthage is determined by the synchronisms provided by Josephus, which according to the Masoretic time scale proposed herein, ends up to be 56 years earlier than suggested by some modern-day historians, *i.e.*, in 870 BCE.⁶¹⁹

First of all, let us rehearse some basic facts. King Solomon began building the Temple in his year four, which equates with the 480th year after the Israelites departed from Egypt:

In the four hundred eightieth year after the Israelites came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD (1 Kgs 6:1).

⁶¹⁸ Barnes, *Chronology*, 31-32. Barnes further noted in a footnote that "the classical literature attests **several different traditions for the dating of the founding of Carthage** (*ibid.*, fn 7)." Really? Yes, indeed, there were "several different attestations." So, why didn't Barnes point them out? Those several different traditions are just what is sorely needed in the discussion in order to appreciate the dilemma.

⁶¹⁹ For a full discussion of these discrepancies, see the research of Gérard Gertoux, who has shown that the date for the founding of Carthage was indeed exactly where the Masoretic time scale places it. ("Dating the Foundation of Carthage," n.d., (online at http://www.academia.edu/2421053/Dating_the_foundation_of_Carthage, accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

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In the fourth year the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid, in the month of Ziv. And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. He was seven years in building it (1 Kgs 6:37-38).

Now Josephus provides us with an extremely important synchronism with Hiram, the king of Tyre, and his activity in helping Solomon with the building of the Temple in Jerusalem:

So the whole time from the reign of Hirom till the building of Carthage, amounts to the sum of **one hundred and fifty-five years and eight months**. Since, then, the temple was built at Jerusalem in the **twelfth year of the reign of Hirom**, there were from the building of the temple until the building of Carthage, **one hundred forty-three years and eight months**.⁶²⁰

We have already determined that Solomon reigned from 1017-977 BCE, therefore, his fourth year would have occurred in 1013 BCE. Consequently, according to Josephus, this year would also coincide with the 12th year of Hiram. That makes Hiram coming to the throne of Tyre in the year of 1025 BCE (1013 + 12 = 1025). 155 years after this date would place the founding of Carthage in the year of 870 BCE (1025 - 155 = 870). We thus now have secured the exact date for the founding of Carthage according to the chronology of the Tyrian king list given to us by Josephus, as well as the Masoretic text.⁶²¹

The Founding of Carthage by Various Classical Historians

The Biblical date for the founding of Carthage that we have just determined as being in 870 BCE is contradicted by different classical sources, none of which come up with that date. The date that the scholar William F. Albright chose was that of a certain Timaeus. This source stated that the founding of Carthage occurred 38 years before the first Olympiad:

As to the last settlement or founding of the city [Rome], or whatever we ought to call it, Timaeus of Sicily, **following what principle I do not know**, places it at the same time as the founding of Carthage, that is, in the thirty-eighth year before the first Olympiad (emphasis mine).⁶²²

Since the Olympic games have been traditionally dated from the year of 776 BCE by numerous sources, then this would place the founding of Carthage in the year of 814 BCE, 56 years later than where the Masoretic chronology places it. Thus, if we were to accept this date as reliable, then 155 years earlier would place the beginning of Hiram's reign in 969 BCE and his year 12 would then fall in the year of 957 BCE. And if this year were Solomon's year four, then Solomon's reign would have begun in the year of 961 BCE. Forty years later would then be the year of the division of the kingdom of Israel, *i.e.*, 921 BCE. And this is the very date for the beginning of the Divided Kingdom proposed by the scholar William F. Albright.⁶²³

⁶²⁰ Josephus, *Ag. Ap.*, 1.18 [§126].

⁶²¹ We should take note that such an early date for the founding of Carthage is not all that far off from what earlier modern historians had believed. *Lempriere's Classical Dictionary* stated: "The precise time of its foundation is unknown, yet most writers seem to agree that it was first built by Dido, about 869 years before the Christian era ..." (Lemprière, *Classical Dictionary*, 128). Amazingly, that is just one year lower than the date proposed herein. Another early author set the date as 874 BCE (François Lenormant, "The Founding of Carthage," in *The World's Great Events*, E. Singleton, ed., (New York: P. F. Collier & Son, 1914), 81, four years after the date proposed herein.

⁶²² Timaeus of Sicily, *apud* Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in *The Roman Antiquities*, 1:74:1, ed. and tr. by Earnest Cary (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), 1:245.

⁶²³ William F. Albright, "The Chronology of the Divided Monarchy of Israel," *BASOR* 100 (1945): 17.

But how reliable is the date of Timaeus for the founding of Carthage? This is not a trivial question. Indeed, right within the very quote of Dionysius that supposedly establishes the date of 814 BCE for the founding of Carthage, Dionysius continues to quote other variant dates proposed by other ancient writers that conflict with the date of Timaeus:

Lucius Cincius, a member of the senate, places it [the founding of Carthage] about the fourth year of the twelfth Olympiad, ...⁶²⁴

From this we see that a certain member of the Roman Senate, Lucius Cincius, placed the founding of Carthage in 729 BCE.⁶²⁵ This is no less than 85 years after Timaeus' date.⁶²⁶ Continuing to quote Dionysius:

... and Quintus Fabius in the first year of the eighth Olympiad.

Thus, Quintus Fabius placed the date of the founding of Carthage in the year of 748 BCE, 66 years after Timaeus' date.⁶²⁷ Remember that this was given all in the same quote concerning the date for the founding of Carthage by Timaeus.

Continuing in what Dionysius informs us:

Porcius Cato does not give the time according to Greek reckoning, but being as careful as any writer in gathering the data of ancient history, he places its founding four hundred and thirty-two years after the Trojan war time, being compared with the *Chronicles* of Eratosthenes, corresponds to the first year of the seventh Olympiad.⁶²⁸

Thus, Marcus Porcius Cato placed the date of the founding of Carthage in the year of 752 BCE, 62 years after the date of Timaeus.⁶²⁹ So, again we must ask, why is Timaeus' date for the founding of Carthage chosen by modern scholars over and above that of Porcius Cato, or for that matter, any of the other authorities quoted by Dionysius?

Yet another variant was proposed by the Roman historian, Velleius Paterculus:

In this period, sixty-five years before the founding of Rome, Carthage was established by the Tyrian Elissa, by some authors called Dido.⁶³⁰

Since Rome was founded in the year of 753 BCE, 65 years earlier places the founding of Carthage in the year of 818 BCE according to Velleius Paterculus.

Another date that is proposed for the founding of Carthage is 825 BCE. This date was set forth by a Roman historian by the name of Pomeius Trugus:

As long as Carthage remained unconquered, she was worshiped as a goddess. This city was founded seventy-two years before Rome.⁶³¹

⁶²⁴ Dionysius of Halicarnassus in *Roman Antiquities*, 1:74:1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), 1:245.

⁶²⁵ The date formula (that can easily be formatted into an EXCEL spreadsheet) for converting Olympiad dates into Julian dates (BCE) is $777 - ((4 \times (\text{OL}-1)) + \text{YR})$, where OL is the given Olympiad and YR is the year within the Olympiad. Thus the 12th year of the 4th Olympiad converts into a Julian date as: being $777 - ((4 \times (12 - 1)) + 4) = 729$ BCE.

⁶²⁶ If Lucius Cinius had been misquoted as saying that the founding of Carthage was "before" instead of "in" the 12th Olympiad, year 4, then the date would have fallen in 861 BCE, a reasonable 9 years after the Biblical date.

⁶²⁷ $777 - ((4 \times (8-1)) + 1) = 748$ BCE.

⁶²⁸ Dionysius, *Roman Antiquities*, 1:74:1.

⁶²⁹ $777 - ((4 \times (7-1)) + 1) = 752$ BCE. Notice that Cato accepted Eratosthenes' date for the Trojan War, viz. 1184 BCE ($752 + 432 = 1184$).

⁶³⁰ Velleius Paterculus, *Compendium of Roman History*, 1.6.4., tr. Frederick W. Shipley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), 15.

⁶³¹ Marcus Junianus Justinus Frontinus: *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus' Philippic Histories*, 18.6.8-9, tr. by Rev. J. S. Watson (1853) (online at <http://www.attalus.org/translate/justin2.html>, accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

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Since Rome was founded in the year of 753 BCE, 72 years earlier would place the founding of Carthage in the year of 825 BCE.

Cicero stated that Carthage was founded 65 years before the first Olympiad ($776 + 65 = 841$)

... [Carthage] was sixty-five years more ancient, being built thirty-nine years before the first Olympiad. And the very ancient Lycurgus had the same thing in view.⁶³²

Livy stated:

Carthage ... was also destroyed by Scipio, who [146 BCE] finally captured the city in the seven-hundredth year since it was founded.⁶³³

Therefore, according to Livy, Carthage was founded in 846 BCE ($146 + 700 = 846$).

With such an array of various dates from ancient sources, how can anyone be confident in any of these testimonies? Nevertheless, it would seem that the highly prominent historian, William F. Albright, believed that the year of 814 BCE, given by Timaeus of Sicily, was the one source that was quite reliable for establishing the date of the founding to Carthage. And based on this fact alone he placed the division of the Kingdom in the year 922/21 BCE.⁶³⁴ He even further got the endorsement of another noted scholar, M. B. Rowton, who also subscribed to this date based upon this one dubious source of evidence.⁶³⁵

Why, we must ask, are we obliged to cast aside the testimony of the Masoretic Text in favor of data that cannot be substantiated by any reliable source or method? Indeed, even Polybius himself vehemently criticized the reliability of Timaeus as a trustworthy historian with these scathing words:

But Timaeus, blinded by his own rancorous spirit, takes a malignant pleasure in recounting with exaggeration the defects of this prince, but passes hastily over all his shining qualities; and seems not to have known, that to suppress facts in history is no less a kind of falsehood, than to report what never had existence.⁶³⁶

If that were not enough, in another place, Polybius again takes issue with Timaeus:

Afric[a] is indeed a country of wonderful fertility. How blameable then is Timaeus, who not only neglected to acquire a proper knowledge in these matters, but with a childish weakness, destitute of judgment, and trusting to the credit of ancient stories, which have been long ago exploded, represents this whole part of the world as a dry and barren sand, incapable of producing any fruits.⁶³⁷

And finally, again, Polybius writes:

Now Timaeus never used the least endeavours to acquire such practice; but confining his residence to a single place, in which also he was a stranger, he even industriously renounced an active life; was acquainted neither with politics, nor war; nor ever exposed himself to the fatigue of visiting distant countries, and of making personal enquiries. **And yet this man has gained the reputation of**

⁶³² Marcus Tullius Cicero, *The Republic of Cicero*, 2:23, by G. W. Featherstonhaugh, (New York: G. & C. Carvill, 1829), 97-98.

⁶³³ Titus Livius (Livy), *Perioche* 51.3.

⁶³⁴ Albright, "Chronology," 16-22.

⁶³⁵ M. B. Rowton, "The Date of the Founding of Solomon's Temple." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 119 (1950): 20-27. Edwin R. Thiele however, (who is noted for his detailed analysis of the chronology of the Hebrew kings) rejected Albright's date for the division of the Kingdom and set his own date for that event as occurring in 931 BCE. See Thiele's main argument in *Mysterious Numbers*, 60-62, fn 2.

⁶³⁶ Polybius, *The General History*, 12, in James Hampton, *The General History of Polybius* (Oxford: W. Baxter, 1823), 350.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*, 357.

being an excellent historian. I know not, for my own part, upon what such pretensions can be grounded; especially as he has himself acknowledged, that a good historian should possess the qualifications which have been here enumerated.⁶³⁸

If ancient contemporaries of Timaeus denounced his methodology, then what makes him a star witness to his testimony by secular scholars of today? It is time that we throw out old theories based on evidence that would never hold up in a court of law.

Fortunately, thanks to one honest chronological researcher, Gérard Gertoux, his research completely dovetails with the conclusion of the present author had already determined. Indeed, he has presented an excellent testimony from other notable ancient historians that Carthage was indeed founded exactly where the Bible places it, right around the year of 870 BCE:

Some historians have provided synchronisms with the founding of Carthage that can be dated. Velleius Paterculus, for example, states that the founding of Carthage coincided with Lycurgus (*Roman History* I:6), the famous king of Sparta who reigned 159 years before the Olympics (in - 884), according to Eratosthenes, but 130 years before King Theopompe (720 - 675), according to Plutarch (*Life of Lycurgus* §IX). According to Tatian, Lycurgus legislated 100 years before the Olympics, or -876 (*Discourses to Greeks* XLI). Likewise, Thucydides (*The Peloponnesian War* VI:2) mentions Carthage when the Greeks arrived in Sicily, three centuries after the Trojan War, or -884 [= -1184 + 300].⁶³⁹

Based on this testimony, we have dates that are far and wide of the date that Timaeus provided, and closer to that of the date of the Trojan king list of 870 BCE.

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Velleius Paterculus: | 884 BCE |
| Eratosthenes: | 850 BCE |
| Tatian: | 876 BCE |
| Thucydides | 884 BCE |

The average of these dates is 873.5, which is only three and a half years too early than the date established from the list of Trojan kings. This is a far cry from the 56 years too late date proposed by Timaeus. The date of Timaeus for the founding of Carthage (falsely accepted as 814 BCE by modern scholars) is a date that is only one out of many to choose from out of several ancient historians. It is in total contradiction with Biblical chronology and therefore must be rejected on that basis. The date for the founding of Carthage that does conform to Biblical chronology is the year of 870 BCE.⁶⁴⁰

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 367 (emphasis mine).

⁶³⁹ Gérard Gertoux, "Dating the Foundation of Carthage," n.d., (online at http://www.academia.edu/2421053/Dating_the_foundation_of_Carthage, accessed Mar. 9, 2022), 7.

⁶⁴⁰ The main reason for this chapter was to refute the idea that the modern reconstructed chronology of Tyre is used to weaponize it against the chronology of the Bible. We have thus seen that it has failed to do so in an astonishingly way. Let us move on.

The Chronology of Tyre

The Chronology of the Tyrian Kings Restored

Table 23:

| King of Tyre | Years of Reign | Date Ruled | Contemporary King of Israel | Years of Reign | Date Ruled |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------|
| Abi-Ba'al ^a | 20? | 1045?-1025 | David | 40 | 1057-1017 |
| Hiram I ^b | 34 | 1025-991 | Solomon | 40 | 1017-977 |
| Ba'al-'ezer I ^c | 17 | 991-974 | Jeroboam I | 22 | 976-955 |
| 'Abd-'Astratus | 9 | 974-965 | | | |
| Methusastartus | 12 | 965-953 | Nadab | 2 | 955-954 |
| 'Ashtar-rom | 9 | 953-944 | Baasha | 24 | 954-931 |
| Phelles | 8 months | 944 | | | |
| Itto-Ba'al I | 32 | 944-912 | Ahab ^d I | 22 | 919-898 |
| Ba'al-'ezer II | 6 | 912-906 | | | |
| Matan I | 29 | 906-877 | Joram | 12 | 897-885 |
| (Elissa) | ? | — | Jehu I | 28 | 885-858 |
| Pygmalion ^e | 47 | 877-830 | | | |

a. Josephus, *Ant.*, 8:5.3 [§144] (Whiston, 222): “Menander also, one who translated the Tyrian archives out of the dialect of the Phoenicians into the Greek language, makes mention of these two kings, where he says thus: — ‘When Abibalus was dead, his son Hiram received the kingdom from him, who, when he had lived fifty-three years, reigned thirty-four.’”

b. The foundation of the Temple is dated to year four of Solomon (1 Kgs 6:1), viz., in 1013 BCE, which coincides with the 12th year of Hiram I, and fundamentally establishes the connection with Tyrian chronology and Biblical chronology.

c. The discussions of Baal-Eser I or II being Bali-ma-AN-zeri mentioned in the annals of Shalmaneser III has no place in this discussion because: 1) it is totally speculative; and 2) the synchronizations are not even close to the Biblical figures. But for those who wish to investigate this further in scholarly material, see William F. Albright, “The New Assyro-Tyrian Synchronism and the Chronology of Tyre,” *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'histoire Orientales et Slaves [Mélanges Isidore Lévy (Bruxelles, 1955)]*, 13 (1933): 1-9; Fuad Safar, “A Further Text of Shalmaneser III from Assur,” *Sumer* 7 (1951): 3-21; H. Jacob Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre* (Jerusalem: Goldberg's Press, 1973), 116-19; E. Lipinski, “Ba'li-Ma'zer II and the Chronology of Tyre,” *Rivista degli studi orientali* 45 (1970): 59-65; Frank Moore Cross, Jr., “An Interpretation of the Nora Stone,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 208 (1972) 17, n. 11.

d. The wife of Ahab, Jezebel, was the daughter of the Tyrenial King, Ithobaal (1 Kgs 16:29-31). As can be seen by this synchronism, the chronology of Menander (cited by Josephus) perfectly agrees with the Masoretic text and thus gives us further confidence in the chronology established herein.

e. This chronological scheme places Pygmalion coming to the throne in 877 BCE. So, if according to Josephus, Carthage was founded in the seventh year of Pygmalion (Josephus, *Ag. Ap.*, 1:18 [§125], Whiston, 781), then it was founded in the year of 870 BCE. And if we add to this date 143 years we come to the year of 1013 BCE. This is exactly the very year that King Solomon's year 4 occurred and Hiram's year 12. The precision of these alignments not only vindicates Josephus' numbers, but lock in the chronology given herein with absolute assurance that everything falls neatly in line with that chronology.

CHAPTER 13

WHO WERE THE PHILISTINES?

*F*OR THE SERIOUS STUDENT OF ANCIENT HISTORY AND CHRONOLOGY, IT IS extremely imperative that we address the utter fiction that modern secular scholars have foisted upon an unsuspecting public concerning the history of the ancient Philistine people. This all goes back to the idea that Egyptian history is the yardstick in which to judge everything about ancient Middle-Eastern chronology and history. It is not!

But in order for modern scholars to get away with their audacious claims, they first have to convince the world that they are the sole proprietors of Biblical interpretation. Indeed, modern-day scholars seem to have somehow taken over the Bible as their own possession to be interpreted as they alone see fit. So, as a result, we have all these prestigious Bible dictionaries and commentaries falling in line with the most egregious secular theories on Biblical history, all based on their nonsensical reconstruction of ancient Egyptian history.

It is time that serious students of ancient history use their personal deductive skills in evaluating all the evidence, rather than being obsequious myrmidons to professors who grade their papers. This cycle must stop now. Their version of ancient history that has been promoted in the ivory towers of the so-called “higher institutions of learning” never happened, pure and simple! And one of the most classic examples of this erroneous reconstruction of ancient history is that concerning the history of the Philistine peoples.

Make no mistake — the history of the Philistines according to modern secular scholars is so vital to their reconstruction of history that they too have no choice but to defend their reconstruction with vigor, or face utter defeat and humiliation in their efforts to reconstruct ancient history correctly.

The history of the Philistines may seem like a side issue, but it is not. Indeed, the true history of the ancient Philistines is no less than a serious make-or-break issue for both sides. And it is for this very reason that this issue must be addressed here and now.

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When Did the Philistines Arrive in Canaan?

The main issue concerning the arrival of the Philistines in Canaan is that modern-day scholarship would have you believe that the Philistines did not show up there until the time of the later Judges of Israel. Really? Why? Because they have rewritten history to make it look like the Philistines were a part of the so-called “Sea People” who attacked Ramesses III in his eighth year (which, by their dating, occurred in 1178 BCE).⁶⁴¹ But according to the Bible, this was the time that the Judges period of Israel was coming to a close. And what happened then? Well, according to the Biblical narrative, it certainly was not the time that the Philistines arrived in Canaan — it was the time that the Philistines were beginning to lose control of the region and were driven out by Samson, Samuel, Saul, and finally King David. Nothing that modern scholarship proposes agrees with the Biblical testimony. So, here again, we have a problem that must be addressed.

However, the real paradox that the serious student of ancient history must consider is this. On the one hand, Egyptian chronology supposedly supports the idea that the Philistines came to Palestine in the 12th century BCE. Right? Okay — but wait a minute — now get this. On the other hand, this fabricated history of the Philistines is what is used as a major buttress to reinforce ancient Egyptian chronology. Really? If this isn’t evidence of circular reasoning, then what is? It is time that serious students of ancient history start looking critically at the evidence and draw a conclusion based upon the facts and not what their professors will grade them on if they do not agree with their flawed entrenched ideology.

One popular book on the subject of the Philistines is by the husband and wife archaeological team, Trude and Moshe Dothan: “*People of the Sea: The Search for the Philistines*.”⁶⁴² It is a well written book with many photographs and illustrations, etc. The most impressive illustration is that of the naval battle that is depicted on the walls of the mortuary temple of pharaoh Ramesses III, known as Medinet Habu, situated near Luxor, Egypt (on the western plain of Thebes).⁶⁴³

The scene that is depicted is a marvel in itself. It is as if a modern-day drone took an aerial photograph of the entire battle. The amount of stunning detail in the murals of Medinet Habu are of such high quality, that they are true historical testimonies in themselves. Those murals have all the indication of actual eyewitnesses recording what precisely took place.⁶⁴⁴ they represent no less than one of the greatest historical works of art in the human experience, but such high quality representations also speak of lateness in the high-level artistic skills.

So, what are the arguments that supposedly support the notion that the Philistines of the Bible were actually those who fought against Ramesses III? We will pursue those pieces of evidence now.

⁶⁴¹ Ramesses III is dated by modern scholars to be from March 1186 to April 1155 BCE (See E. F. Wente and C. C. Van Siclen III, “A Chronology of the New Kingdom,” in *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes* [*Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, 39 {January 12, 1977}, ed. by J. H. Johnson and E. F. Wente]), 235. Since the battle with the Sea People occurred in Ramesses III’s year 8, this would place it in the year of 1178 BCE. Such a date would only be three years after the Trojan War. Yet, the classical historians and the Bible are totally silent about any such major conglomeration by Sea People invading Egypt at this time. Indeed, “Rameses III’s enemies moved through Palestine; but we have no hint of land invasion of Egypt from Asia Minor through Palestine in the days of Samuel and Saul,” Martin Sieff, “In Defense of the Revised Chronology,” in *S.I.S. Review* (1:1, Jan. 1976): 12-13.

⁶⁴² Trude Dothan and Moshe Dothan, *People of the Sea: The Search for the Philistines* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992).

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, 17.

The “Sea People” Argument

First of all, it must be made clear that the Bible knows of no such thing as Greek mercenary soldiers invading the Canaanite territory in the days of Samuel and David. Such a preposterous argument is not supported by any clay tablets, hieroglyphics, nor ancient Greek texts.

So, the first question to ask is this: where is the proof that there were any Greek mercenaries back at the time of the Judges of Israel? We know that Greek mercenary soldiers were the hired army of the Persians in the fifth, fourth, and third centuries BCE — but there are none in the time when David was alive.⁶⁴⁵

But none of this false reasoning can be used to claim that the Philistines came to ancient Canaan in the twelfth century BCE. Why? It is simply because the fact of the matter is that Ramesses III has been carelessly mis-dated by modern scholars some eight centuries before his time to support one of the most egregious reconstructions of history that have ever been advanced.⁶⁴⁶

Ramesses III rightfully belongs to the fourth century BCE — not the twelfth century BCE! And when we look at what was going on at the time of the fourth century BCE, we see that it fits perfectly with what we see on the walls of the temple of Medinet Habu. A thoroughly and refreshingly explanation is given to us by the insightful comments by Dr. Herman L. Hoeh:

The most famous king of Dynasty XX was Ramesses III. In his 8th year he fought a tremendous battle against invaders from Asia. These invaders are usually assumed to be Philistines. History texts claim that Ramesses’ victory over the “Philistines” forced them to withdraw from Egypt and settle in Palestine, where they commenced their attacks against Israel in the time of Saul. This reconstruction of history is an utter fiction! Historians have willingly forgotten that the Philistines were already dwelling in Palestine in the days of Abram — over eight centuries before the kingship of Saul. “And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days” (Genesis 21:34, also verse 32).

The invaders whom Ramesses III repelled in his eighth year were “sea peoples” — from the isles and coastlands of the northern Mediterranean. They were mercenary

⁶⁴⁴ From this author’s point of view, the representations on the walls of Medinet Habu temple are clearly way later than the twelfth century BCE. It is time for serious students of ancient history to re-examine those walls in the light of what is being brought out here. The people, the depictions of ships, the type of clothing, the types of weapons, all appear to be far more sophisticated than what is represented in earlier Egyptian art. Medinet Habu is no doubt the best preserved royal building of its kind in all of ancient Egypt. What screams out at us is that it is a product of latter Egypt — viz., the time of Necbentano — and certainly not the ancient period of the Judges, and Samuel, King Saul, and King David. Sir Alan Gardiner must have certainly understood this when he sighed: “It belongs to the unequal chances of archaeology that more written evidence should be forthcoming from the last reigns of Dyn. XX than from any other period of Egyptian history” (*Egypt of the Pharaohs* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961], 299). Of course, it does! That evidence speaks volumes of lateness! For more evidence of lateness, the serious student of history must consult M. F. Laming Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949-55), vol. 2, *History and Archaeology of the Site*, pt. 2, *Text*, 12-14.

⁶⁴⁵ If one wishes to learn the truth about Greek mercenary soldiers, then one must consult the well researched source on the subject by H. W. Parke, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers: From the Earliest Times to the Battle of Ipsus* (Chicago, Ares Publishers Inc., 1981 [first published by Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1933]).

⁶⁴⁶ The serious truth seeker is obliged to read, Immanuel Velikovsky, *Peoples of the Sea* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1977), chapter I, “Twelfth or Fourth Century?,” 3-28, for the wealth of information and citations for the compelling proof that Ramesses III has been mis-dated by some eight centuries too early by modern scholars. If that isn’t the most colossal upset in ancient history, then one must ask, what is? Yet, this is the reason that modern scholars just cannot accept such an displacement, yet we must draw the reader’s attention to such an upset.

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troops of a vast empire that ruled in Asia Minor and over Palestine. That was the Persian Empire — and its mercenaries were Greeks and their allies! The Egyptian word *Haunebu*, applied by Ramesses III to the northern sea peoples, is the very same word found on Egyptian monuments in reference to Greeks! (See E. Naville's *The Shrine of Saft el Henneh and the Land of Goshen* (1887), pages 6 ff.)

Ramesses III's invaders were crested soldiers. The Greeks were famous for their crested troops. Ramesses' enemies moved through Palestine. So did the Persian and Greek troops in 373. By contrast, there was no land invasion from Asia Minor through Palestine in the days of Samuel or Saul!

Ramesses defeated his enemies at the time of the rising Nile. The Persians and Greeks were defeated in 373 at the time of the Nile floods (*Diodorus Siculus*, XV, 41-43). Ramesses III speaks of natural calamity and unrest in the isles of the sea peoples. In 373 the Greek isles were devastated with frightful earthquakes and floods, according to Diodorus and other ancient writers.

The dates of Ramesses III may now be established as follows:

Ramesses III — 31 years — 381-350.

His 8th year was 374-373, the year of his great victory. Ramesses also records victories in the 5th and 11th years over Libyan and other invaders.⁶⁴⁷

Ramesses III must be dated to this time in history, which Dr. Velikovsky so brilliantly adduced some 75 years ago. Everything fits exactly with this timeline, and nothing else fits with anything that was going on with Egypt or Canaan in the twelfth century BCE. The fact of the matter is that the modern interpretation of the history of Ramesses III is most undoubtedly the biggest calamity in all of modern scholarship. And with this, the entire hoax of modern interpretation of Egyptian history and especially, *i.e.*, Egyptian chronology, falls like a house of cards. Nevertheless, let us pursue this further.

The “Peleset” Equals “Philistine” Argument

One of the peoples identified in the inscriptions of Ramesses III were the Peleset (or Pereset since the “l” and the “r” were often interchanged). It was none other than the decipherer of the Egyptian Hieroglyphics himself, Jean-François Champollion (23 December 1790 – 4 March 1832) who came up with the idea that the Peleset/Pereset were in fact the ancient Philistines mentioned in the Biblical texts.⁶⁴⁸

Well, let's see. Based on philologically considerations, we have the consonantal letters that make up the name for the modern English term: “Philistine”: “P”, “L”, “S”, and “T.” Then scholars typically insert a neutral “e” sound between the consonants in order to allow the word to be pronounced in English. Thus, the term “Peleset” emerges and, voilà, a new theory is born.

All of this kind of rationalization, of course, is not an attempt by modern scholars to restore the history of ancient Egypt but is nothing short of a precarious attempt to face save the hoax that is the modern theory of Egyptian chronology. Of course, scholars assuredly know that this kind of evidence is so weak, that it borders on a deliberate con-job. So, what they have to do in order to bolster their position is to make forceful statements that have an air of authority and intimidation:

⁶⁴⁷ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:228-29. See also A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 408. More amazing information on the reign of Ramesses III will be given in volume 2 of this series.

⁶⁴⁸ Dothan and Dothan, *People of the Sea*, 19-23.

... it is important to identify the Peleset, the P-L-S-T of the hieroglyphics. Scholars are unanimous in this. The Peleset are the Philistines. In the texts and illustrations at Midinet Habu, they make their first appearance in history.⁶⁴⁹

Yes, scholars are “unanimous in this” — not because it is fact — but because they have no other choice than to make forceful statements like this or lose all credibility whatsoever. Indeed, such bold assertions as this show us desperation — not confidence. Nevertheless, statements like these, without any real evidence to support those theories, should be apparent to honest researchers. And when all the facts are scrutinized by honest researchers, then it will be seen that the modern-day scholarly reconstruction of ancient Egyptian chronology crumbles like a house of cards under its own weight.

The fact of the matter is that the “Peleset” of the Ramesses III inscriptions were not in any way “Philistines.” The “Peleset” were far later than the time of Solomon — they were hired Greek mercenary soldiers in the time of the fourth century BCE. We must come to the stunning realization that even the list of Sea Powers never once identified the Philistines as ever being a Sea Power in the Eastern Mediterranean Ocean. That should tell you something!

The Philistines of the Bible were in Palestine from the time of Abraham down through the time of the Judges period, and even to the time of Jeremiah. Also, the Ionian Greeks were nothing less than what the Egyptians referred to as the “Sea-People.” The ridiculous theory that the Philistines were ever a part of the so-called “Sea-People” in the time of kings Saul and David must be thoroughly overthrown once and for all. It has absolutely no place in ancient history, nor Biblical history.

Okay, then, what other strong evidence is there to make the case that the Peleset of the “Sea People” were in fact Philistines? Ah, yes, it is those distinctive plumed headdresses.

What About the Plumed Headdresses?

The argument that supposedly the people who wore plumed headdresses were, in fact, Philistines, put forth by modern scholars, is another assumption that is entirely without support. Indeed, if the distinctive headdresses were a distinguishing feature of the Philistine battle attire, where, oh where, is there any scriptural evidence that would support such a far-reaching assumption as that?

Where did modern-day scholars ever come up with the idea that the Philistines wore plumed headdresses? The answer is simple; they just planted that idea into everyone’s head, and then turned around and used that fantasy to convince people that this was additional proof that the Philistines were the “Sea People” that invaded Egypt during the time of Ramesses III! It is an assumption, not evidence! Nevertheless, here is what one encounters in scholarly books of today:

An additional piece of evidence relating to the Philistines was found by Italian excavators in 1908, digging at the Minoan palace near Phaistos [Crete], near the southern coast of the Island. It was a clay disc stamped with pictographic symbols, among which were a warrior’s head crowned with what seemed to be a “feathered headdress,” ships, and weapons. It was dated from the Middle Minoan III period (c. 1600 B.C.), and its significance became a matter of intense scholarly interest since it was suggestive of the Philistines and the other Sea Peoples.⁶⁵⁰

⁶⁴⁹ Manuel Robbins, *Collapse of the Bronze Age: The Story of Greece, Troy, Israel, Egypt, and the Peoples of the Sea* (New York: Authors Choice Press, 2001), 283.

⁶⁵⁰ Dothan and Dothan, *People of the Sea*, 35-6.

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Can we just feel the “intenseness” of that “scholarly interest ... [of feathered Headdresses] suggestive of the Philistines?” Oh please! Ask yourselves this; if modern scholars do not have proof that the plumed headdresses were actual distinctive Philistine headdresses, then now we are entering into a territory of utter speculation that is totally unfounded. This is not scholarship! This kind of dastardly sleight-of-hand borders on a deliberate subterfuge that must be condemned.

Nevertheless, Donald B. Redford further follows this line of reasoning:

Most prominent in both reliefs and texts are the Peleset, with Tjerkru running a close second. **These wear, characteristically, a fillet from which protrudes a floppy “hoplite’s” plume ...**⁶⁵¹

Wait just a minute here — before moving on in this scholar’s quote — did this eminent, award-winning “scholar” just use the term “Hoplite” in referring to the soldiers who fought against Ramesses III? Stop right here! The “Hoplites” were a band of famous Greek mercenary soldiers in the fourth century BCE people — not a contingent of force in the twelfth century BCE!

Diodorus mentioned Greek Hoplite mercenaries in Xerxes’ invasion of Greece in 480 BCE.⁶⁵² The Hoplites had nothing to do with the early Philistines of the Bible, even if this characterization was a mere reference to similarity. In other words, without any proof, this scholar just planted another seed of comparison of Hoplites and Philistines together that has no basis in actual support of the Bible, nor ancient history. Okay, so having said that, let us continue in Redford’s comments:

... Now it has long been realized that the plumed headdress of the Egyptian reliefs finds a parallel in a sign ... in the script of the curious “Phaistos Disk,” discovered in the early part of the century at Phaistos, Crete.⁶⁵³

Okay, so what does that prove? On what basis can anyone identify these plumed invaders of Ramesses III in any way with the Philistines of the Bible based on this “Phaistos Disk?” Suggestive reasoning has no place in sound Biblical research. Would any of this shoddy rationalization stand up as convicting evidence in any court of Law? Never! But that is the kind of convoluted reasoning that students of ancient history are subjected to — and are demanded to accept in order to get a degree from such esteemed institutions as the one they have chosen. This mindless cycle of insanity needs to be called out and ended once and for all! It is not higher learning. It is nothing less than a perpetual cycle of delusional complicity in one of the greatest hoaxes ever to be exposed in all of academia — the false chronology of ancient Egypt!

Okay, let’s be honest. If one truly looks at the soldiers identified as the “Peleset/Pereset,” they curiously have nothing that one would consider as battle armor. Do they even look like hardened invading hordes? Their appearance certainly does not conjure up the image of Philistine giants of the Bible, like Goliath. If the images on the walls are of these dainty-looking peoples are the Philistines of the Bible, these images fall short of what the Bible describes.

Further, consider this:

⁶⁵¹ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 251 (emphasis the author’s).

⁶⁵² Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, 11:5: “And the Greeks, when they learned of the great size of the Persian armaments, dispatched ten thousand **hoplites** into Thessaly ...,” (Cambridge: Harvard University Press [Loeb Classical Library 279], 1946), 4:123 (online at http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Diodorus_Siculus/11A*.html, accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

⁶⁵³ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 251-52.

The Peoples of the Sea, like the Pereset, are beardless. Surviving Greek art shows that, from the times of which any recollections or pictures are preserved, Greek men grew beards, and not until the late fifth or fourth century did they begin to shave their faces.⁶⁵⁴

Indeed, the Peleset have all the appearance of an elite guard, with their cute little pleaded skirts, and signature fluffy headdresses — almost exquisite in their appearance. Obviously, these well uniformed “soldiers”, were a product of a later Greek culture that could produce expensive uniforms of high quality, uniformity, and dare we say a touch of “gayety”? What a contrast to the giant Philistine warriors that we read about during the times of Samson and David!

Understanding the Timeline of Ramesses III

First, we need to understand that it was the vast Persian Empire under Artaxerxes II (404-358 BCE) who were the ones that hired Greek mercenary soldiers:

Artaxerxes enforced another peace on the Greeks in 374. The younger Dionysius of Syracuse made a treaty with him. After his surrender, Evagoras remained quiet, but, in 374, he and his son Pnytagoras were murdered by a eunuch. Although another son, Nicocles, next held the throne, not only was his state in disorder and his treasury empty but he must contend against the dislike of Artaxerxes. Nevertheless, he was able to pay a huge number of his coins, graced by Athena and Aphrodite — twenty talents, it was later said — to Isocrates for composing a eulogy of his father.⁶⁵⁵

Next we read:

Since 379, Pharnabazus had been collecting Greek mercenaries for the **Egyptian expedition**. To pay them, he minted frequent issues of coins ... the head of a warrior in **crested helmet** acknowledges the Greek mercenaries to be paid with those coins.⁶⁵⁶

This is the time period that fits in with the time of Ramesses III — not the twelfth century! From Velikovsky’s initial landmark research, he makes other important points to consider:

259. In Herodotus there can be no reference to Ramses III, because the historian lived before the pharaoh. The history of Egypt by Herodotus, though defective in details, is more nearly accurate than that of the later and modern historians, because he placed the history of the Eighteenth, the Ethiopian, and the Nineteenth Dynasties in fairly accurate order.⁶⁵⁷

260. “Invasion of Egypt by the archaic Greeks” in the twelfth century is a fallacy. The Greeks who participated in the wars of Ramses III and who are shown as changing sides, were at first soldiers of Chabrias, assisting Egypt, and the troops of Iphicrates, opposing Ramses III.

264. A camp was set up by Pharnabazus in Acco in preparation for an attack against the Egypt of Ramses III.

265. A naval invasion against Egypt was undertaken by forcing the Mendesian mouth of the Nile, fortified by Ramses III.

⁶⁵⁴ Velikovsky, *Peoples of the Sea*, 55.

⁶⁵⁵ Olmstead, *Persian Empire*, 406.

⁶⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 406-07 (emphasis the author’s).

⁶⁵⁷ The feeble attempt to make the “Rhampsinitos” in Herodotus (*The Histories*, 2.121.1) Ramesses III would mean that he preceded the “Old Kingdom” pharaohs such as Khufu (*Histories*, 2.124), Khafra (*Histories*, 2.127), and Menkaura (*Histories*, 2.129). Such a laughable effort at trying to save modern-day theories of Egyptian chronology are glowing examples of deliberate dishonesty that needs to be called out as junk scholarship, pure and simple!

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266. Flame throwers were used on the Persian ships forty years before their use by the Tyrians at the siege of Tyre by Alexander.

267. The Egyptian bas-reliefs of the temple at Medinet Habu show Sidonian ships and Persian carriages comparable to the pictures of ships and carriages on the Sidonian coins minted during the years of the invasion.

268. The bas-reliefs of Medinet Habu show the reform of Iphicrates in lengthening the swords and spears and reducing the armor intended for defense.

269. The Jewish military colony at Elephantine still existed in 374 BCE and participated in the defense of the eastern border of Egypt. These professional soldiers were called Marienu by Ramses III, which is the Aramaic Marenu.

271. The Greek letters of classical form incised on the tiles of Ramses III during the process of manufacture (found at Tell-el-Yahudieh in the Delta) present no problem. They are Greek letters of the fourth century.

272. The inlay work and glazing of the tiles of Ramses III are innovations introduced from Persia.

273. The hunting motifs in the art of Ramses III were inspired by Assyrian and Persian bas-reliefs; some motifs of the Greek art also made their influence felt in the murals of Ramses III.⁶⁵⁸

Modern-day scholars refuse to investigate these matters because they know that the truth would expose their fallacious interpretation of history. However, modern-day students of history need to investigate these claims in order to restore integrity to ancient historical scholarship.

The Origin of the Philistines — Crete or Cyprus?

The Bible first mentions the Philistines in the so-called “Table of Nations” in Genesis as being descended from the “Caphtorim”:

From Mizraim [son of Ham, son of Noah] sprang the Ludim, Anamites, Lehabites, Haphtuhites, Pathrusites, Xasluhites, and Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines were descended (Gen 10:14, REB).

Caphtor has been identified by earlier scholars as the Isle of Crete; but more recent investigation suggests that it was actually the Isle of Cyprus.⁶⁵⁹ Professor John Bimson further notes that

Caphtor of the scriptures, along with *Keftiu* of Egyptian sources, is usually identified with Crete, though this view has not been without its critics. For example, J. C. GREENFIELD comments: “... There is no evidence for a Philistine occupation of Crete, nor do the facts about the Philistines, known from archaeological and literary sources, betray any relationship between them and Crete” (*The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* [1962], vol. I, p. 534).⁶⁶⁰

Finally, consider the fact that it was Immanuel Velikovsky, who had already identified Caphtor as Cyprus over three decades before this statement was made:

If Caphtor was not Cyprus, then no name for Cyprus and no mention of the island would be found in the Scriptures, and that would be unlikely because Cyprus is very close to Syria. The islands of Khitiim (Jeremiah 2:10; Ezekiel 27:6), usually identified as Cyprus, signified all the islands and coastlands of the west, Macedonia, and even Italy.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁵⁸ Velikovsky, “Theses,” online at <https://www.varchive.org/ce/theses.htm> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

⁶⁵⁹ So James Strange, *Caphtor/Keftiu. A New Investigation* (Leiden: Brill, Acta Theologica Danica 14, 1980).

⁶⁶⁰ John Bimson, “The Arrival of the Philistines and the Revised Chronology”, *S. I. S. Review* (Summer, 1978) 3:1: 13, 15.

Philistines in the Days of Abraham

The fact that Philistines were living in the days of Abraham is well attested (Gen 21:32-4):

When they had made a covenant at Beer-sheba, Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, left and returned to the land of the Philistines. ... And Abraham resided as an alien many days in the land of the Philistines.”⁶⁶²

From statements like this, we can see that the term “Land of the Philistines” had a sense of established permanency from whom those possessors of that land were. Obviously, the Philistine people must have had already established their residency long before the time of Abraham, as the “Table of Nations” (Gen 10:14) would indicate.

But since modern-day secular scholars today hold to the idea that Moses could never have possibly been the author of such a phrase — then, obviously to them, those words must have been concocted long after those events narrated in Genesis by some Yahwistic storyteller in the sixth century BCE who didn’t know what he was talking about. Right? That is their case, and they are sticking to it.⁶⁶³

However, there are other Biblical passages that establish that the Philistines were in Canaan at the time of Abraham. In Genesis, the 26th, chapter we read:

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Gerar, to King Abimelech of the Philistines ... (Gen 26:1-16).

Abimelech, considered to be a king of the Philistines (and who desired Isaac’s wife), was also mentioned in the *Book of Jasher*, where he is said to have died in the year of 1885 BCE (according to the restored chronology advanced herein).⁶⁶⁴ This would mean that the Philistines at least had been long established in the “Land of Canaan.” Indeed, that would be some six centuries prior to when modern scholars would place them. But passages like these are once again just brushed off by modern scholars as just so much Hebrew mythology that should not be taken seriously.

The “Way of the Land of Philistines”

We should also consider that at the time of the “Exodus,” when the Israelites left Egypt

... God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was nearer ... (Exod 13:17).

What an amazing passage! Why? Because it shows us that at the time of the Exodus there was already a well-known route from Egypt to Canaan (which, by our chronology correctly occurred in 1493 BCE); and that significant highway already had an established name bearing the name of “The Way of the Land of the Philistines.” People at the time knew exactly what route that was referred to by its very name because it was a way of commerce and certainly a well-traveled

⁶⁶¹ Velikovsky, *Ages*, 201. Velikovsky even went on to write an entire book on the Sea People entitled: *Peoples of the Sea* (*op cit.*). This book is a must read and has abundant convincing evidence concerning the Sea People and Ramesses III.

⁶⁶² The *Book of Jasher* (Jasher 24:19-21) also tells us that a certain Abimelech, king of the Philistines, died in the year of 1885 BCE by the chronology restored herein.

⁶⁶³ Indeed, by simply rejecting the testimony of the Bible, then modern scholars are able to free themselves from any requirement that the term “Land of the Philistines” has any historical legitimacy before the twelfth century BCE.

⁶⁶⁴ This would be in the year AM 2084, *i.e.*, Abraham’s year 138 (one year after Sarah’s death). Isaac would have been 38 at this time. This fits in exactly with the chronology proposed herein.

Who were The Philistines?

and well-known highway. And so, by this timeline, that would place this occurrence of “The Way of the Philistines” by at least some 300 years before the time when modern scholars would place the first coming of the Philistines.

Philistines During the Judges Period

At the end of the Conquest (BCE 1453) we read that five coastal cities in the land of Canaan, viz., Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, were ruled by Philistine kings, which was a territory formerly held by a people called the “Avvim” (Josh 13:2-3; Judg 3:3).⁶⁶⁵ And as noted above, these five coastal cities had a road that went straight back to Egypt, which was not only the closer route from Egypt (as was mentioned in Exodus 13:17 above), but the land was flat that made it an easy road to travel, unlike other regions of Canaan that were mountainous. This is another strong piece of evidence that the Philistines of the Bible had a long-established colony along the Mediterranean coast.

Carl S. Ehrlich further expounds on the Philistines during the time of the Judges:

Both Josh 13:2-3 and Judg 3:3 preserve a memory of the Philistine territory as outside that of Israel. The latter book also lists the Philistines among the enemies of nascent Israel (Judg 10:6-7). It is, however; only in the Samson cycle of stories (Judg 13-16) that the Philistines begin to play a central role in the biblical narrative. Although ostensibly a pan-Israelite hero, Samson is depicted as an individualist from the tribe of Dan, who oftentimes ran afoul of the Philistines owing to his taste for foreign women. Thus he engages in contests of wits with the Philistines (Judg 14:10-19), burns their fields (Judg 15:4-5), walks off with the city gate of Gaza (Judg 16:3), and kills thousands of them, particularly when he collapses the temple of Dagon on himself and the gathered Philistines (Judg 15:8, 15; 16:27-30).⁶⁶⁶

Do these passages sound like there were no Philistines during the time of the Judges? Shamgar struck down six hundred Philistines (Judg 3:31). The Israelites were sold into the hands of the Philistines during the days of Jephthah (Judg 10:6-11). The story of Samson and Delila was occasioned when the Philistines were oppressed for 40 years. The story of David and Goliath, the giant Philistine, has all the elements of a long tradition. So, let us finally abandon any notion that the Philistines were latecomers in the time of Saul that fought against Ramesses III in the twelfth century BCE. This is delusional history that never existed, plain and simple!

⁶⁶⁵ John Bimson here notes: “Although a successful conquest of the Philistine region by the tribe of Judah is reported in the Hebrew text of Judges 1:18, the Greek version changes the sense by including a negative: ‘But Judah did not inherit Gaza nor her coasts ...’ etc. This reading is probably to be preferred, being in keeping with Joshua 13:2-3 and Judges 3:3” (“The Arrival of the Philistines” [S.I.S. Review, 3:1, 1978]: 15, fn 6). Either way, both versions establish the fact that Philistines were in the region at the time of the Conquest.

⁶⁶⁶ Carl S. Ehrlich, “Philistines,” *The New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, Abingdon Press: 2009), 4:508.

CHAPTER 14

THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

*I*N THE FORTIETH YEAR OF KING SOLOMON [977 BCE], UPON HIS DEATH, THE KINGDOM of Israel became divided. Israel henceforth became two nations now known as the Northern Kingdom, or the Kingdom of Israel, with its capital centered in Samaria, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, with its capital centered in Jerusalem.

In that year King Solomon's son, Rehoboam succeeded the throne of David in Jerusalem, while the Northern kingdom of Israel came to be ruled by Jeroboam I who established a new religio-political system for the northern tribes. From this point on Israel and Judah as a whole became known as the "Divided Kingdom" that were in constant conflict with each other.

It is the Kingdom of Judah which provides us with a clear and continuous chronological path for sustaining the overall chronology of the Bible. The chronology of Israel, on the other hand, is fraught with many complications, and can only be understood in the light of the synchronisms of the Judean kings. Therefore, each of these separate kingdoms must be reviewed independently: first the Kingdom of Judah; then accordingly the Kingdom of Israel.

Chronologists down through the centuries have grappled with determining the exact year for the division of the Monarchy. Some older chronologists have surprisingly determined the "exact date" for the schism far removed from the target date of 587 BCE. So, it is worthwhile to review some of the dates proposed before moving on.

Proposed Dates for the Division of Israel and Judah

The date for the division of the Kingdom of Israel has been long a matter of controversy among scholars, ancient and modern. The magnitude of the controversy can be seen in the following widely divergent dates proposed down through history by various chronologists, just to name a few (both ancient and modern), listed from the highest dates to the lowest:

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| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Martin Anstey (1913) | 983 BCE ⁶⁶⁷ |
| M. Christine Tetley | 981 BCE ⁶⁶⁸ |
| Adam Rutherford | 978 BCE ⁶⁶⁹ |
| John Jackson | 977 BCE ⁶⁷⁰ |
| Dorothy M. Bone | 977 BCE ⁶⁷¹ |
| Josephus (37 CE - circa 100 CE) | 981 BCE ⁶⁷² |
| Henry Fynes Clinton | 976 BCE ⁶⁷³ |
| William Betham | 958 BCE ⁶⁷⁴ |
| Faulstich | 947 BCE ⁶⁷⁵ |
| Jeremy Hughes | 937 BCE ⁶⁷⁶ |
| William Hamilton Barnes | 932 BCE ⁶⁷⁷ |
| Edwin R. Thiele | 931 BCE ⁶⁷⁸ |
| Gershon Galil | 931 BCE ⁶⁷⁹ |
| John Rogerson | 931 BCE ⁶⁸⁰ |
| Jack Finegan | 931 BCE ⁶⁸¹ |
| Joachim Begrich | 926 BCE ⁶⁸² |
| Hayes and Hooker | 926 BCE ⁶⁸³ |
| William F. Albright | 922 BCE ⁶⁸⁴ |
| Ernest L. Martin (1980) | 920 BCE ⁶⁸⁵ |
| Philip Mauro | 903 BCE ⁶⁸⁶ |
| E. W. Bullinger, 1922 | 880 BCE ⁶⁸⁷ |
| <i>The Seder Olam</i> , 160 CE | 798 BCE ⁶⁸⁸ |

⁶⁶⁷ Anstey, *Romance*, 1:255.

⁶⁶⁸ M. Christine Tetley, *The Reconstructed Chronology of the Divided Kingdom* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 184.

⁶⁶⁹ Rutherford, *Bible Chronology*, 16.

⁶⁷⁰ John Jackson, *Chronological Antiquities* (London: J. Noon, 1752), 1:146. Jackson nailed it 270 years ago.

⁶⁷¹ Dorothy M. Bone, *Chronology of the Hebrew Divided Kingdom*, (London: Avon Books, 1997).

⁶⁷² Josephus, *Ant.*, 8:10:4 [§264] (Whiston, 856).

⁶⁷³ Clinton, *Epitome*, 128.

⁶⁷⁴ Betham, *Genealogical Tables*, Table 17.

⁶⁷⁵ Eugene Faulstich, *History, Harmony and the Hebrew Kings* (Spencer, Iowa: Chronology Books, 1986).

⁶⁷⁶ Jeremy Hughes, *Secrets of the Times* (London: Continuum, 2009), 189.

⁶⁷⁷ William H. Barnes, *Studies*, 153.

⁶⁷⁸ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 54.

⁶⁷⁹ Galil, *Chronology*, 147.

⁶⁸⁰ John Rogerson, *Chronicle of the Old Testament Kings: The Reign-by-Reign Record of the Rulers of Ancient Israel* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999).

⁶⁸¹ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 247.

⁶⁸² Joachim Begrich, *Die Chronologie der Könige von Israel und Juda, und die Quellen des Rahmens der Königsbücher, mit fünf ausführlichen Tabellen* (Tübingen: Siebeck Mohr, 1929).

⁶⁸³ John H. Hayes and Paul K. Hooker, *A New Chronology for the Kings of Israel and Judah* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 16.

⁶⁸⁴ Albright, "Chronology", 20.

⁶⁸⁵ Ernest L. Martin, *The Home Study Course* (Portland, Oreg.: Academy for Scriptural Knowledge, 1985), 23.

⁶⁸⁶ Philip Mauro, *Wonders*, 55.

⁶⁸⁷ Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, Appendices 50 and 57.

⁶⁸⁸ Kantor, *Jewish Time Line Encyclopedia*, 49.

It will immediately be seen that there has been in modern times a definite move to drive down the date of the division of the Kingdom of Israel by some 45/6 years from the actual date. Obviously, the 390 day/year prophecy of Ezekiel 35:5 played no part in any of these proposals. The main reason for this rejection lies in the fact that modern scholarship has opted to accept the chronology of the Assyrian king lists over the chronology of the Bible. Floyd Nolen Jones correctly analyzed this phenomenon:

... Thiele has placed the date of the disruption at 931/930 BC, only 345 years from the date of Jerusalem's fall — an error of 45 years (390-345 = 45)! ...

Although Thiele believed he had correctly synchronized the Hebrew record by bringing it in line with the Assyrian annals, he actually placed the biblical events completely out of their historic settings. Albright's dates, identifiable at once by his 922 BC year for the schism, are even farther out of their true positions.

The 390-year declaration, taken in context, is most significant for it takes the date of the schism (or there about by anyone's consideration) out of the hands of men and places it on a firm foundation. This passage serves to inhibit and constrict the fanciful imagination and conjecture of scholars from all the various disciplines (be they chronologers, archaeologists, theologians, etc.) and sets a fixed mathematical value of 390 years on the period.

... It is the mathematical key to correctly founding the chronology of the kings of Judah and Israel. By this, the chronological configuration of Dr. Edwin R. Thiele must be seen as refuted. Not only should fundamental conservatives so concede, but all fair thinking people as well, for such should be willing to, at the very least, give the Hebrew Text its day on the witness stand.⁶⁸⁹

It is interesting to note that the recent study of M. Christine Tetley appears not to have been influenced by the now accepted Assyrian chronology. Her intriguing date of 981 BCE for the division of the kingdom is 50 years earlier than the Edwin R. Thiele date. It is, however, only a mere four years earlier than the Biblical date established herein. Although we cannot go into the intricacies of her painstaking work here, at least it means that finally a new generation of scholars are beginning to reconstruct the chronology of the Divided Kingdom without being a slave to the misunderstood and highly suspect Assyrian king lists.

Also, note that William F. Albright's approach to the chronology of the Divided Kingdom represented an attempt to align the Biblical numbers with that of the assumed chronology of the ancient Phoenician city of Tyre.⁶⁹⁰ And as has already been shown, Albright had to justify his chronology by amending the Biblical text in many places. Such an approach must be rejected because it represents another attempt to save a theory which we can all see now is discredited.

The Reckoning of Years

Like all discussions on chronology, we have to set the ground rules for which we can proceed, especially so for the period of the Divided Monarchy. Despite all the vigorous rhetoric, years in the Kingdom of Judah were not counted on an Autumn-to-Autumn (Tishri-Tishri) basis, but most certainly on a Spring-to-Spring (Nisan-to-Nisan) calendar from the time of Moses forward.⁶⁹¹

Moses was instructed that years were to be counted from the Spring (Exod 12:2), and there is no sound evidence that this method was ever changed in Judah subsequent to his time. Despite this

⁶⁸⁹ Jones, *Chronology*, 135.

⁶⁹⁰ Albright, "Chronology," 16-22.

⁶⁹¹ Hughes (*Secrets*, 165-178) admits that Judah used a Spring-to-Spring calendar but only in post-exilic times.

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fact, scholars such as Edwin R. Thiele and Abraham Malamat (and others) have assumed that years were counted in Judah on an Autumn-to-Autumn basis. Their superficial arguments have been analyzed by the present author and rejected for the following reasons.

First of all, Solomon began the construction of the Temple in the second month of the year — the month of Ziv — now known as Iyyar (1 Kgs 6:1, 37). This reckoning begins with the first month of Abib (later adopting the Babylonian name Nisan) in the Spring of the year. He completed the Temple in the month of Bul (later called Marheshvan, also influenced by Babylonia), which is the eighth month of the year in the autumn (1 Kgs 7:1). It is these facts alone that should compel us to conclude that Solomon used the Mosaic Spring-to-Spring calendar. Right?

Nevertheless, despite this fact, Thiele,⁶⁹² Malamat,⁶⁹³ and other modern scholars have maintained that the Kingdom of Judah used an Autumn-to-Autumn calendar. The main reason that they have come to that conclusion is that a Autumn-to-Autumn helps them to make a case for the Fall of Jerusalem occurring in 586 BCE. However, we have completely shattered those theories in previous chapters. Indeed, the chronology of the Divided Kingdom cannot be properly restored with a Autumn-to-Autumn calendar and a 390-year, especially for the government for Judah.

We must also understand that calendar reckoning was in the hands of the Priesthood. As noted above, it was a method handed down from the days of Moses that the year began in the Spring (Exod 12:2). If the Priesthood somewhere along the line had decided to go back to an Autumn-to-Autumn calendar, and reject the law of Moses, where is the evidence that such a monumental change in calendar reckoning ever occurred? If such an occurrence ever did happen, then at some point in time there would have been a year that either contained only 6 months or 18 months. Has anyone ever thought of this serious implication before? It is never brought up in any discussion in the legions of volumes that supposedly address this problem.

There is no evidence that in Jerusalem there ever was such a significant calendar change since the year of the Exodus in 1493 BCE, wherein the previous year was indeed only a six-month year. The only time that this could have logically happened is after the death of King Solomon when the Northern Kingdom split with the Southern Kingdom and decided to defiantly return to an Autumn-to-Autumn year. But in Jerusalem, the calendar would have had to remain intact in order to fulfill the requirement of Leviticus 23 in calculating the dates for the Holy Days mentioned therein.

The brilliant scholar Jack Finegan also pointed out another reason why a Spring calendar was the calendar in use in Judah:

... there is a plain example of the latter usage when Jer 36:9 mentions the ninth month and the following verse 22 indicates that it was in the winter: counting from the fall, the ninth month would be in summer; counting from the spring, the ninth month would be in winter.⁶⁹⁴

⁶⁹² Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 27-30. Thiele concluded his discussion with the following statement: "Perhaps the strongest argument for the use of a Tishri-to-Tishri regnal year in Judah is that this method works, giving us a harmonious pattern of the regnal years and synchronisms, while with a Nisan-to-Nisan regnal year the old discrepancies would be retained" (*ibid.*, 30). This statement is not true. What discrepancies would be retained? Pay attention. The Nisan-to-Nisan calendar for Judah and a Tishri-to-Tishri calendar of Israel provides just as much of a workable solution as Thiele's synchronisms, as this author has independently confirmed with his own spread sheet analysis (see Appendix 2).

⁶⁹³ Malamat, "Last Kings," 146ff.

⁶⁹⁴ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 33. For a fuller discussion of Nisan years in Judah, see Jones, *Chronology*, 118-19.

This observation alone indicates that even in the final days of the Kingdom of Judah, months were still counted from the Spring — not from the Autumn! Indeed, the Mishnah itself preserved the tradition that the month of Nisan was the new year for kings.⁶⁹⁵ In other words, years beginning with Nisan were not only used for observing the annual Holy Days of Leviticus 23 but were used for the calculation of the reigns of kings.⁶⁹⁶

On the other hand, there is evidence that the northern Kingdom of Israel did reckon their calendar differently, for they kept the Feast of Tabernacles in the eighth month, rather than the Scriptural seventh month (1 Kgs 12:32-33). Jeroboam I was determined to stick his finger in the eye of the Jerusalem priesthood by establishing his own priesthood which reverted back to the original calendar that was still followed by the old Canaanite tradition of counting years from the Autumn.⁶⁹⁷

The Chronology of the Kingdom of Judah

We have already determined in chapter 1 that the Kingdom of Judah lasted for 390 years, culminating with the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE. However, at face value the numbers given for the reigns of the king of Judah at face value stack up to 393 years.

But as has been brought out previously, King Jehoram co-reigned with his father, King Jehoshaphat, for three years (2 Kgs 1:17, 3:1, 8:16).⁶⁹⁸

Thus, Jehoshaphat's total 8 years of reign included a three-year co-reign with his son, Jehoram, and is therefore considered to be only 5 years in the aggregate total. With this understanding, then it is only a matter of working backward from 587 BCE to 977 BCE for the beginning of the Kingdom of Judah and then arrive at the internal dates of 390 years in total.

As we have seen above, the most popular starting point for the year of the division of the Kingdom of Israel up until now was Thiele's date of 931 BCE.⁶⁹⁹ This date, however, is woefully out of line with the chronology of the Bible. Nevertheless, Thiele's date has become ubiquitous throughout the literature. It is encountered in countless Bible Dictionaries, Bible Commentaries, Encyclopedias, and on and on and on. But, alas, it now must be abandoned once and for all. Here, finally, is the true Biblical chronology of the Kingdom of Judah, which will serve as the basis for the entire Divided Kingdom beginning in 977 BCE.⁷⁰⁰

⁶⁹⁵ *Babylonian Talmud, Rosh HaShana*, 1:1.

⁶⁹⁶ However, the Jews also still maintained a civil calendar for business purposes that began with the month of Tishri in the Autumn of the year, which can be proven by such usage, cf. 1 Kgs 6:1, 37, 38. See Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 28-29. These considerations do not overthrow the fact that holy days and the "new year for kings" began in the Spring.

⁶⁹⁷ That the northern kingdom used a Tishri calendar has been proven by this author in a personal spread-sheet that is reproduced in Appendix 2.

⁶⁹⁸ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 32, 64, chart on pages 65, 70,

⁶⁹⁹ Thiele (*Mysterious Numbers*, 52) stated: "With an interval of 78 years between the accession of Jeroboam I and the death of Ahab, and with the latter taking place in 853 B.C., we thus secure the date 931 B.C. as the year of Jeroboam's accession and of the schism between Judah and Israel." As will be shown, the death of Ahab in the so-called Battle of Qarqar in 853 BCE is pure fiction. The Ahab of the Battle of Qarqar was a different Ahab, as will be shown.

⁷⁰⁰ Since the Kingdom of Israel used a Fall-to-Fall calendar, this date must be reduced to 976 BCE for Israel for synchronization reasons. See page 280.

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The Chronology of the Kingdom of Judah Restored

Table 24:

| King | Reign | Years BCE | Years AM | Reference |
|------------------------|-------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Rehoboam | 17 | 977-960 | 3384-3401 | 2 Chron 12:13 |
| Abijam | 3 | 960-957 | 3401-3404 | 1 Kgs 15:2 |
| Asa | 41 | 957-916 | 3404-3445 | 1 Kgs 15:2 |
| Jehoshaphat | 22 | 916-894 | 3445-3467 | 1 Kgs 22:42 |
| Jeshoshaphat & Jehoram | 3 | 894-891 | 3467-3470 | 1 Kgs 22:42 |
| Jehoram | 5 | 891-886 | 3470-3475 | 2 Kgs 8:16-17; 3:1 |
| Ahaziah | 1 | 886-885 | 3475-3476 | 2 Kgs 8:26 |
| Athaliah | 6 | 885-879 | 3476-3482 | 2 Kgs 11:3-4 |
| Joash | 40 | 879-839 | 3482-3522 | 2 Kgs 12:1-2 |
| Amaziah | 29 | 839-810 | 3522-3551 | 2 Kgs 14:2 |
| Azariah (Uzziah) | 52 | 810-758 | 3551-3603 | 2 Kgs 15:2 |
| Jotham | 16 | 758-742 | 3603-3619 | 2 Kgs 15:33 |
| Ahaz | 16 | 742-726 | 3619-3635 | 2 Kgs 16:2 |
| Hezekiah | 29 | 726-697 | 3635-3664 | 2 Kgs 18:2 |
| Manasseh | 55 | 697-642 | 3664-3719 | 2 Kgs 21:1 |
| Amon | 2 | 642-640 | 3719-3721 | 2 Kgs 21:19 |
| Josiah | 31 | 640-609 | 3721-3752 | 2 Kgs 22:1 |
| Jehoahaz (3 months) | 0 | 609 | 3752 | 2 Kgs 23:31 |
| Jehoiakim | 11 | 609-598 | 3752-3763 | 2 Kgs 23:36 |
| Jehoiachin (3 months) | 0 | 598 | 3763 | 2 Kgs 24:8 |
| Zedekiah | 11 | 598-587 | 3763-3774 | 2 Kgs 24:18 |
| Total | 390 | | | Ezek. 4:5-6 |

The chronology here for the Kingdom of Judah is correct to the very year! It will serve as the basis for the chronology of the Kingdom of Israel, and the foundation for all future chronological discussions. Let us now discuss some of the problems that have been presented by secular scholars that would refute this chronology.

The Hezekiah/Sennacherib Problem

There appears to be a problem with the chronology of Hezekiah matching up with the chronology of the Assyrian King Sennacherib. This pugnacious problem must be investigated and resolved. The Bible states that Sennacherib invaded Judah in King Hezekiah's 14th year. Since Hezekiah came to the throne in the year of 726 BCE, his 14th year would occur in 712 BCE. But according to Assyrian chronology, Sennacherib did not come to his throne until the year of 704 BCE, eight years after the Bible says that he attacked Hezekiah. The amount of literature discussing this problem is legion.⁷⁰¹ The problem is compounded when we look into the annals of Sennacherib. He records that he attacked Hezekiah in the third year of his reign, *viz.*, 701 BCE.

Now scholars, and indeed, students of history, have a choice here. Either accept the Biblical data and come up with an explanation as to why Sennacherib attacked Hezekiah before he was king in his own right or reject the Bible and say that the Assyrian data supersedes the Biblical data. Which choice do you think that scholars would embrace? But, of course, scholars would and always will accept the Assyrian data over the Bible's. However, a third option would be that there were two campaigns by Sennacherib. Support for this choice is in the Bible. The first campaign is described in 2 Kings 18:13-16. The other encounter begins in verse 17 to 2 Kings 19:37.⁷⁰² Yet, scholars have rejected this explanation, combining them into a single campaign. Nevertheless, here are the simple facts to consider:

1. The northern Kingdom of Israel was destroyed by the Assyrians in the year 720 BCE.⁷⁰³ The Bible says that this occurred in Hezekiah's sixth year (2 Kgs 18:9-10). This fact alone tells us that Hezekiah came to the throne in 726 BCE.

2. As soon as Hezekiah came to the throne he held a Passover celebration wherein he invited the peoples from the Northern Kingdom of Israel to join in the festivities (2 Chr 30:1-9). Obviously, this occurred while there was still an Israel to invite, *i.e.*, before Israel went into captivity in 720 BCE.

3. Discussions in scholarly circles today about whether Sennacherib attacked Judah once or twice are numerous.⁷⁰⁴ If we compare the Biblical account with the Assyrian account, we see some similarities, but a closer look shows us that they are not the same event.⁷⁰⁵ The Assyrian

⁷⁰¹ For instance, see older bibliographies in the reference material of Leo L. Honor, *Sennacherib's Invasion of Palestine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912).

⁷⁰² Also found in 2 Chr 32:1-23; Isa 36:2-37:38.

⁷⁰³ This will be discussed further on.

⁷⁰⁴ To name a few of the important discussions see Leo L. Honor, *Sennacherib's Invasion*; Siegfried H. Horn, "Did Sennacherib Campaign Once or Twice Against Hezekiah?" *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 4 (1966): 1-28; Nadav Na'aman, "Sennacherib's 'Letter to the God' on His Campaign to Judah," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 214 (1974): 25-78; Nadav Na'aman, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah and the Date of the LMLK Stamps," *Vetus Testamentum* 29 (1979): 61-86; Alan R. Millard, "Sennacherib's Attack on Hezekiah," *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985): 61-77; William H. Shea, "Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985): 401-18; Danna Nolan Fewell, "Sennacherib's Defeat: Words at War in 2 Kings 18:13-19:37," *Journal of the Study of the Old Testament* 34 (1986): 79-90; Frank J. Yurko, "The Shabaka-Shebitku Coregency and the Supposed Second Campaign of Sennacherib against Judah: A Critical Assessment," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 110 (1991): 35-45; William H. Shea, "Jerusalem under Siege. Did Sennacherib Attack Twice?" *Biblical Archaeological Review* 25/6 (1999): 36-64; William R. Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: New Studies*. Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East 18 (Leiden: E. J. Brill Academic Publishers, Inc., 1999).

⁷⁰⁵ For a discerning discussion on this point see Jones, *Chronology*, 164-65.

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accounts and the Biblical accounts in relation to the story of Hezekiah are two different campaigns. Scholars insist that they are one and the same in order to justify saying the Biblical record is in error. The first attack is not recorded in Assyrian records because Sennacherib was a co-regent to his father Sargon II (722-705 BCE).

4. The Biblical account also mentions that Tirhakah of Ethiopia had went out against Sennacherib (2 Kgs 19:8). However, Tirhakah (Taharqa) reigned from 690-644 BCE, so it would seem that this is an anomaly between both the Bible and the Assyrian records. In other words, even if there was an Assyrian campaign in 701 BCE, this would be still 11 years before Taharqa came to the throne. The plot thickens. How are we to resolve all these discrepancies?

Donald Redford presumed the following explanation:

To take the reference to Taharqa in 2 Kings 19:9 seriously (cf. Na'aman *VT* 29 [1979, 65; Kitchen *RdE* 34 [1982-1083], 65) is unwarranted and produces misleading results. ... Quite simply, Taharqa's was the only Pharaonic name known to the author of 2 Kings 19 for the period about which he was writing; and he mistakenly assumed he was already on the throne.⁷⁰⁶

One has to ask, is this a real solution to the problem or a cop out?⁷⁰⁷ Indeed, there is evidence that scholars have missed. Taharqa could have lead a force into Hezekiah's realm at that time. Not that modern scholars would accept such evidence, however, but when we discuss the chronology of the Dynasty 25 in volume two, it will be seen that there was a separate king list preserved by the Ethiopians that actually gave a reign for Taharqa of 49 years. The *Ras Tafari* king list places the thirteenth king from Menelek I as being *Tsawi Terhak Warada Nagash*, 49 years.⁷⁰⁸

Since Taharqa's reign came to an end in 664 BCE, then 49 years earlier would place his coming to the throne in 713 BCE. This would mean that he shared the throne with Shabaka for seven years (713-706 BCE) and jointly reigned throughout Shebitku's reign for another 16 years (706-790 BCE), before his sole reign of 26 years (690-664 BCE).

Notice that the year 713 BCE is also a year before Hezekiah's sickness and Sennacherib's invasion. This would precisely dovetail with the chronology that we have established thus far and resolves the supposed anomaly.

5. The Bible records that on the recovery of Hezekiah from his sickness, the Babylonian monarch Merodach-Baladan had sent an embassy with letters and a present to Hezekiah (2 Kgs 20:12). Merodach-Baladan's reign extended from 722-710 BCE.⁷⁰⁹ Hezekiah's year 14 (712 BCE) therefore falls in the tenth year of Merodach-Baladan's reign. This demands that Hezekiah's year 14 be placed prior to the time when Sennacherib officially mounted the throne in 704 BCE. This must be the correct interpretation when all the facts are analyzed.

The short answer, therefore, is that Sennacherib was reigning jointly with his father Sargon in Hezekiah's year 14 (712 BCE), although he did not succeed his father until the year of 704 BCE.

Although scholars reject this solution, there is evidence that co-reigning did occur among the Assyrians. Shalmaneser III dated events in his annals to the years of 11 and 18, but on the Black

⁷⁰⁶ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 353.

⁷⁰⁷ Gary A. Rendsburg notes: "... the Bible does not claim he was *melek misrayim*, rather he is called *melek kûs*," "Review Essay of Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, in *South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism*, no. 110, (Approaches to Ancient Judaism, New Series, vol. 7, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 213.

⁷⁰⁸ C. F. Rey, *In the Country of the Blue Nile* (London: Duckworth, 1927), 266.

⁷⁰⁹ See *Canon of Ptolemy*, as outlined in chapter one.

Obelisk these same events were dated to the years 14 and 21.⁷¹⁰ So, this solution to the problem certainly is not an exception to the norm in Assyrian history.

The Chronology of the Kingdom of Israel

It is now time to develop a chronology of the Kingdom of Israel that fits with the chronology of the Kingdom of Judah. It will be interesting to see that it fits perfectly, but with certain problems to be discussed. Let us now look at the facts.

Upon the death of King Solomon, the northern tribes established a Kingdom soon afterward under King Jeroboam I at the same time that the Southern Kingdom established their Kingdom under the son of King Solomon, King Rehoboam. The northern Kingdom of Israel was centered in Samaria. The Southern Kingdom was centered in Jerusalem.

The kings of Israel began reckoning years on an Autumn-to-Autumn calendar, and they used a non-accession system of counting their reigns. Later on, for some reason, it must be demonstrated that they switched to an accession reckoning method. Their reigns can only be understood by the synchronisms with the Kings of Judah. Therefore, we can only establish Israel's chronology by the following considerations:

1. Rehoboam of Judah ascended the throne in the year of 977 BCE. More specifically, it was in the calendar year from Nisan of 977 BCE to the end of Adar 976 BCE. That year, therefore, represented his accession year, whereas from Nisan 976 BCE to Adar 975 BCE represented his official year 1. He reigned for 17 years, viz. 977 - 960 BCE (1 Kgs 14:21).

Jeroboam I of Israel began his reign shortly after Rehoboam from Tishri of 977 BCE to Elul 976 BCE. Also, since in the Northern Kingdom of Israel used a non-accession year system, then that year represented year 1 of Jeroboam I. In order for both of their reigns to have occurred within these parameters, both kings must have come to the throne between the Autumn of 977 BCE and the Spring of 976 BCE.

Then in the 17th year of Rehoboam of Judah, he was succeeded by Abijah, who comes to the throne in Jeroboam's 18th year (1 Kgs 15:1-2). Notice, why is Rehoboam's year 17 considered to be Jeroboam's year 18? They both came to the throne at nearly the same time, did they not? The only logical conclusion is that Rehoboam's accession year was Jeroboam's year 1. Thus, this is clear evidence that Jeroboam I used a non-accession year system.

2. Upon the death of Jeroboam I in his 22nd year, he was succeeded by Nadab, who ruled for 2 years (1 Kgs 15:25-26). He came to the throne in the second year of Asa. Yet, at the end of his two-year reign, he was succeeded by Baasha, who came to the throne in Asa's third year of reign (1 Kgs 15:28, 33). So, how can a two year reign of Nadab increment only one year in the reign of Asa? This is another clear indication that the kings of Israel used a non-accession year system. There can be only one explanation — Nadab had no accession year. He counted his year 1 as Asa's year 2, and his year 2 as Asa's year 3. Thus, this is self-evident confirmation that Nadab used a non-accession year system.

Edwin R. Thiele correctly noted here:

It will be noticed that with Nadab having begun his two-year reign in the second year of Asa and having completed it in Asa's third year, we have here a good

⁷¹⁰ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 280.

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example of the comparative results of the reckoning of reigns on the accession- and the nonaccession-year basis.⁷¹¹

3. Next, we notice that from the time that Jeroboam I of Israel took the throne, to the time that Joram took the throne of Israel, was a period of 86 years, according to the stated years of their reigns recorded. Yet, this same period of time to the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat of Judah was a period of 79 years, a difference of 7 years. This 7-year difference can only be understood by the fact that there were exactly 7 kings of Israel during this time, each one using a non-accession method of dating. Thus, for every year stated, the actual non-accession years were reckoned one year less in the total sum of 79 years.⁷¹² And here is the evidence that proves just this fact.

First 79 Years of Israel's Kings Were Counted on a Non-Accession Basis

Table 25:

| Kings of Judah | | | Kings of Israel | | | |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|----------------|---------------------|
| No. | King | Years of Reign | No. | King | Years of Reign | Non-Accession Years |
| 1 | Rehoboam | 17 | 1 | Jeroboam I | 22 | 21 |
| 2 | Abijah | 3 | 2 | Nadab | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | Asa | 41 | 3 | Baasha | 24 | 23 |
| 4 | Jehoshaphat | 18 | 4 | Elah | 2 | 1 |
| | | | 5 | Omri | 12 | 11 |
| | | | 6 | Ahab | 22 | 21 |
| | | | 7 | Ahaziah | 2 | 1 |
| Totals | | 79 | | | 86 | 79 |

As can be seen, these accession years of the kings of Judah, match the non-accession years of the kings of Israel exactly up to this point. The year is the 79th year of the Kingdom, viz., 977-898 BCE, Spring-to-Spring reckoning — an amazing verification of the non-accession system in use here.

4. At this point, the successor of Ahaziah of Israel, Joram, comes to the throne and reigns for 12 years in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat of Judah, the 2nd of Ahaziah of Israel (2 Kgs 1:17, 3:1). Obviously, Joram changes from reckoning his years from the non-accession year system to the accession year system.⁷¹³ This is evident because if this were not the case, then the numbers do not work. This is another reason why we have to use the reigns of the Judean kings (who consistently

⁷¹¹ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 57.

⁷¹² Jones, *Chronology*, 130.

⁷¹³ The fact is also corroborated by Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 38.

used the accession system throughout their period) in order to make sense of these vagaries of the Israelite kings.⁷¹⁴

5. The synchronisms between Judah and Israel are consistent until we get down to the time of Jehu I. First of all, 2 Kings 10:36 states that Jehu I reigned for 28 years. Josephus, on the other hand, tells us that Jehu I reigned only 27 years.⁷¹⁵

6. 2 Kings 13:1 states that King Jehoahaz, son of Jehu I, began to reign in the 23rd year of Joash of Judah. But such a synchronization is impossible if Judah (as is maintained herein) used an accession year system and a Spring-to-Spring calendar throughout its monarchy. Therefore, the correct synchronization should have been the 21st year of Joash if everything is to work out by the chronology established thus far. But if that be true, then how are we to explain this textual dilemma?⁷¹⁶ Fortunately, Josephus comes to the rescue with (believe it or not!) a correction to the Masoretic Text (and the *Seder Olam*) that has been mysteriously glossed over by earlier chronologists down through time.⁷¹⁷ Thank you, Josephus, for confirming, in fact, that it was indeed the 21st year of Joash that Jehoahaz came to the throne, as the chronology here demands.⁷¹⁸ But a scribal error in the Masoretic Text, God forbid! Once again Josephus is quoting from an earlier version of the Hebrew text prior to the scribal error of the Masoretic Text?⁷¹⁹ Jehoahaz's son, Jehoash, indeed began to reign in the 37th year of Joash. This is corroborated by (1) 2 Kings 13:10, (2) Josephus,⁷²⁰ and (3) the fact that the numbers come back into realignment only when we follow Josephus' corrected scheme. Thus, divine preservation of the data is faithfully maintained after all by reaching back to an earlier source.⁷²¹ Indeed, rather than a support for non-accession dating here, the whole theory has blown up in the faces of those who support it, and in reality is another strong proof of the correct chronology finally established herein.

7. Jehoash died in the 16th year of his reign (2 Kgs 13:10). This synchronization shows us that this would have been in the 14th year of Amaziah of Judah. This is corroborated by the fact that when Jehoash died the Bible states:

King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz of Israel (2 Kgs 14:17).

⁷¹⁴ Edwin R. Thiele had it backward. He believed that to resolve the issue was to assume that it was Judah that went from an accession year system to a non-accession year system, and then accession year back again. This false assumption is due to the fact that he also assumed the untrue belief that Judah used a Fall-to-Fall calendar year, which it did not. Such faulty reasoning got himself all tangled up wherein he had to resort to this back-and-forth explanation concerning an accession/non-accession/accession malarkey which should have been a wake-up call that something was wrong with his entire thesis. Had he recognized that Judah used a Spring-to-Spring calendar and an accession system throughout its existence, he never would have had to resort to such erroneous explanations. The truth is that the Kingdom of Judah did use a Spring-to-Spring calendar and an accession-year system consistently throughout its entire period.

⁷¹⁵ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.8.1 [§160] (Whiston, 256). See further note d. on page 258.

⁷¹⁶ We should note that an important fact here. There is no parallel account in the *Book of Chronicles*.

⁷¹⁷ This is where many chronologists once again pull a fast one in telling you that this supposedly proves a non-accession year system was used in both Judah and Israel at this time. This, again, is a false premise.

⁷¹⁸ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9:8.5 [§173] (Whiston, 257).

⁷¹⁹ Tetley (*Reconstructed Chronology*, 38) interestingly noted this significant difference between the Masoretic Text and Josephus, but for some reason brushed it aside without so much as a note-worthy comment.

⁷²⁰ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.8.6 [§177] (Whiston, 257).

⁷²¹ The error of the Masoretic Text is further corroborated when we see that Amaziah of Judah begins to reign in the 2nd year of Jehoash (2 Kgs 14:1-2), reaffirming that the subsequent synchronisms between the kings of Judah and Israel are right back on track with the rest of the data given in the MT.

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Since Amaziah reigned a total of 29 years (2 Kgs 14:2), then if we subtract the 15 years remaining in his reign after the death of Jehoash, we have gone full circle back to the 14th year of Amaziah for the death of Jehoash (29 - 15 = 14). Then, in the 15th year of Amaziah, the text states that Jeroboam II took the throne and reigned for 41 years (2 Kgs 14:32).

8. After Amaziah of Judah had reigned for 29 years, he died in the 14th year of Jeroboam II of Israel according to a year-by-year reckoning. Yet, his son Azariah is said to have ascended the throne of Judah in the 27th year of Jeroboam II (2 Kgs 15:1-2).⁷²² Thus, we have an obvious 13-year anomaly. We have no age given for Jeroboam II when he came to the throne, so we cannot verify whether he co-reigned with his father or not. However, it seems unlikely that he did, since there is no indication of such a co-regency.⁷²³ Indeed, Josephus, once again helps us solve the riddle in stating that it was in fact the 14th year of Jeroboam II that Azariah came to the throne,⁷²⁴ exactly as the year that this synchronization would place it.

Azariah was 16 years old when he came to the throne, and therefore was born in the very year that Jehoash of Israel died, and Jeroboam II came to the throne in Israel.

So, where did the year 27 come in? Since Jeroboam II reigned 41 years, that falls exactly in year 27 of Azariah, the year that the great earthquake struck the Northern Kingdom, and Jeroboam II was forced to flee from Israel. Somehow this year 27 must have gotten confused with the 27th year of Jeroboam II, rather than Azariah's 27th year, the year that Jeroboam II ended his reign.

Since Jeroboam II fled Israel upon the year of the great earthquake, that year was the 27th year of Azariah, *i.e.*, 783/4 BCE. Two years before this time, the prophet Amos began to prophesy:

The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of King Uzziah of Judah and in the days of king Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake (Amos 1:1).

Two years before the great earthquake puts us in the year of 785/84 BCE. Isaiah also began to prophesy at this very time, mentioning the devastation of the earthquake.

The vision of Isaiah son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. ...Your country lies desolate, your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence aliens devour your land. It is desolate, as overthrown by foreigners [the Syrians]. And daughter Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a shelter in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. If the LORD of hosts had not left us a few survivors [Jeroboam and his returning army], we would have been like Sodom and become like Gomorrah (Isa 1:1, 7-9).

⁷²² The LXX (Brenton, 510) and the *Seder Olam* 19:3 "Jehu to Uzziah" (Guggenheimer, 167) agree with the 27-year figure.

⁷²³ Nevertheless, Thiele (*Mysterious Numbers*, 79) believed that Jeroboam II had in fact co-reigned with his father for 12 years: "If 768/67, when Amaziah died and Azariah began his reign, marks both the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam's reign (II Kings 15:1) and also the fifteenth year of this reign since 782/81 when Jehoash died, it would simply mean that Jeroboam II had ruled twelve years jointly with his father before the father died and that the synchronism of II Kings 15:1, instead of being expressed in terms of Jeroboam's sole reign, is expressed in terms of the beginning of his co-regency."

⁷²⁴ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.10.3 [§§215-216] (Whiston, 260). This is another obvious indication that Josephus was working with an older text than the Masoretic Text — a text apparently even older than the version upon which the LXX was ostensibly based? It is for this reason that the present author has given deference to Josephus' earlier Biblical source to correct the apparent variances that have crept into both the Masoretic and Septuagint texts.

Now here is the important thing to consider. Even though in chapter seven of Isaiah it relates events in the days of Ahaz, king of Judah (742-26 BCE), it nevertheless inserts a parenthetical statement in verse 8:

Within sixty-five years Ephraim will be shattered, no longer a people (Isa 7:8).

It is only when we subtract this 65 years from the time that Amos and Isaiah began to prophesy (785/84 BCE), that we come up with the exact date for the fall of Israel, viz., 720/19 BCE — the very year that Israel was indeed conquered by the Assyrians, as we shall now see below. Notice this important observation:

Rashi in his commentary on the verse refers to a statement in *Seder 'Olam* that is not in our editions or known manuscripts which determines the 65 years as starting with Amos's prophecies, two years before the earthquake, i.e., two years before Azariah/Uzziah was stricken by leprosy, 27 years before Uzziah's death.⁷²⁵

Once again, we are confronted with facts that confirm that we are exactly right on track with the true chronology of the Bible. Everything is falling into place exactly as the Masoretic Text of the Bible (with nonetheless help from Josephus' earlier sources) demonstrates.

Remember that the earthquake itself was brought about due to the fact that Azariah (Uzziah) arrogated to himself the privilege to enter into the Holy of Holies of the Temple, possibly on the very Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). He was warned by the priesthood not to do this, but Azariah defied their authority, and the rest is history.

But when he had become strong he grew proud, to his destruction. For he was false to the LORD his God, and entered the temple of the LORD to make offering on the altar of incense. But the priest Azariah went in after him, with eighty priests of the LORD who were men of valor; they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to make offering to the LORD, but for the priests the descendants of Aaron, who are consecrated to make offering. Go out of the sanctuary; for you have done wrong, and it will bring you no honor from the LORD God." Then Uzziah was angry. Now he had a censer in his hand to make offering, and when he became angry with the priests a leprous disease broke out on his forehead, in the presence of the priests in the house of the LORD, by the altar of incense. When the chief priest Azariah, and all the priests, looked at him, he was leprous in his forehead. They hurried him out, and he himself hurried to get out, because the LORD had struck him. King Uzziah was leprous to the day of his death, and being leprous lived in a separate house, for he was excluded from the house of the LORD. His son Jotham was in charge of the palace of the king, governing the people of the land.

Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz wrote. Uzziah slept with his ancestors; they buried him near his ancestors in the burial field that belonged to the kings, for they said, "He is leprous." His son Jotham succeeded him (2 Chron 26:16-23).

It was Josephus who equated Azariah's leprosy with the great earthquake:

(223) ... Accordingly, when a remarkable day was come [Day of Atonement?], and a general festival was to be celebrated, he [Azariah] put on the holy garment, and went into the temple to offer incense to God upon the golden altar, (224) which he was prohibited to do by Azariah the high priest, who had fourscore priests with him, and who told him that it was not lawful for him to offer sacrifice, and that "none beside the posterity of Aaron were permitted so to do." And when they cried out, that he must go out of the temple, and not transgress against God, he was wroth at them, and threatened to kill them, unless they would hold their peace. (225) In the

⁷²⁵ *Seder Olam* 22:1 "Destruction of Samaria" (Guggenheimer, 193).

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meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground, and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, inso-much that the leprosy seized upon him immediately, and before the city, at a place called Eroge, half the mountain broke off from the rest on the west, and rolled itself four furlongs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as the king's gardens, were spoiled by the obstruction. (226) Now, as soon as the priest saw that the king's face was infected with the leprosy, they told him of the calamity he was under, and commanded that he should go out of the city as a polluted person. Hereupon he was so confounded at the sad distemper, and sensible that he was not at liberty to contradict, that he did as he was commanded, and underwent this miserable and terrible punishment for an intention beyond what befitted a man to have, and for the impiety against God which was implied therein. (227) So he abode out of the city for some time, and lived a private life, while his son Jotham took the government, after which he died with grief and anxiety at what had happened to him, when he had lived sixty-eight years, and reigned of them fifty-two; and was buried by himself in his own gardens.⁷²⁶

9. Since the days of Jehu I of Israel, Hazael of Aram (Syria) had been warring against Israel for control of the area east of the Jordan River (2 Kgs 10:33). Upon the great earthquake, Jeroboam II was forced to flee Israel. Then Ben-Hadad of Aram moved in and Israel was without a king for twelve years. At the end of the twelve years, Jeroboam II returned with an army to recapture Israel from the Syrians.

Thus, upon Jeroboam's II returned on the scene he

... restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gathe-hepher. For the LORD saw the distress of Israel was very bitter [due to the earthquake]; there was no one left, bond or free, and no one to help Israel [during the time of this inter-regnum]. But the LORD had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the hand of [the returning] Jeroboam son of Joash (2 Kgs 14:23-29).

Yes, it was Jeroboam II that returned to save Israel. Josephus recorded that:

So Jeroboam made an expedition against the Syrians, and overran all their country, as Jonah had foretold.⁷²⁷

Again, this was fulfilled when Jeroboam II returned to Israel after his twelve years in exile.

10. At this time in history, the chronology of Israel is back on track with the synchronisms of the Judean kings. Obviously, our reconstructions have been proven true time and time again by those synchronisms.

Next, Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II, came to the throne of Israel in the 38th year of Azariah (2 Kgs 15:8) and only reigned six months before he was slain by Shallum, who came to the throne in the 39th year of Azariah (2 Kgs 15:13). Then after Shallum, who reigned for only one month, he too was slain by Menahem, who came to the throne and reigned for 10 years (2 Kgs 15:14, 17).

Menahem reigned from 771/70 to 761/60 BCE. Yet he (and Azariah of Judah) reportedly paid tribute to the Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser III who reigned from 745-727 BCE. This chronology would seem to place Menahem at least 15 years earlier than the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. In order to resolve this problem, scholars, such as Edwin Thiele, use this fact as an excuse to throw

⁷²⁶ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.10.4 [§§222-27] (Whiston, 260-61). That the earthquake was due to Uzziah's sin was also attested to in the *Talmud*, *Yerushalami*, *Berakhot*, 9:13(f) and implied by Zech 14:4.

⁷²⁷ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.10.1 [§207] (Whiston, 259).

out the chronology of the Bible and supplant it with a chronology that would appear to support Assyrian chronology.

The problem lies in what we understand about Assyrian chronology, which will be fully discussed when we address the Assyrians in volume two. But for now, it is important to understand who the Bible refers to as the Assyrian king known as “Pul.”

Who was the Assyrian King “Pul”?

Most scholars today are of the belief that the identity of King “Pul” is the pre-throne name for Tiglath-pileser III, and that this identification is now a foregone conclusion that no longer needs any further discussion.⁷²⁸

Once that identification is secured, then scholars feel it is their duty to use that assumption again to destroy the chronology of the Bible. But that approach is backward. Biblical chronology is firm and any conflicts with secular history as interpreted by modern scholars is what is on shaky ground. Although scholars will vehemently reject the reconstruction given within these pages, it nevertheless has the merits of restoring both Israelite and Assyrian chronology and history to its proper place.

In the section in volume 2 on the Assyrian Empire, it will be explained in more depth than can be dealt with here. Suffice it to say now, lest we get too far ahead of the story, Tiglath-pileser III established a new dynasty of his own in Nineveh in the year of 745 BCE. Scholars have blissfully followed the pieced together king list making it look like that Tiglath-pileser III was the son of Ashur-nirari V (conventionally dated 755-745 BCE).⁷²⁹ Yet, Tiglath-pileser III himself said that he was the son of Adad-nirari.⁷³⁰ What Adad-nirari could this have been? Obviously, it would have been a real stretch for him to have been the son of Adad-nirari II, conventionally dated 811–783 BCE. Or could he have been? This discrepancy should have been a clue to scholars that it was

⁷²⁸ Miller and Hayes (*History*, 315), when referring to King Pul, stated: “the Assyrian King Pul (who bore the throne name Tiglath-pileser) ...” Wait a minute; let’s be clear here. The so-called inventive pre-throne name for King “Pul” is nothing more than a brainchild of modern day scholarship who are injecting this entire idea into the discussion, knowing full well that this opinion has been a subject of fierce debate. Furthermore, discussion is indeed required for the problem of “Pul” versus “Tiglath-pileser III.” See Steven W. Holloway, “The Quest for Sargon, Pul, and Tiglath-pileser in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Mesopotamia and the Bible: Comparative Explorations*, Mark W. Chavalas and K. Lawson Younger, Jr., eds. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books Academic, 2002), 68-87; Oswald Loretz and Werner E. Mayer, “Pulu-Tiglatpileser III. und Menahem von Israel nach assyrischen Quellen und 2 Kön 15, 19-20,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 22 (1990): 222-231; A. P. McIntyre, “Tiglath-pileser vs. Pul,” in *Bible 7, History 0* (Nashville: Winston-Derek Publishers, Inc., 1989), 67-74. Reprinted in *Catastrophism and Ancient History* 14:2 (July 1992): 168-73; Herbert A. Storck, “Tiglath-Pileser vs Pul: Who is Pulling Whose Leg?” (A review of A. P. McIntyre’s “*Bible 7, History 0*”), *Chronology and Catastrophism Review* 8 (1966): 175 -85. For further discussion, see: J. A. Brinkman, *A Political History of Post-Kassite Babylonia, 1158-722 BC* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1968), 61; B. Oded, “The Inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III: Review Article,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 47 (1997): 109.

⁷²⁹ Jean-Jacques Glassner and Benjamin R. Foster, ed., *Mesopotamian Chronicles* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 145. The “earlier copy” of the king list ends with Ashur-nirari (V) and appears to have been drawn up around 620 BCE. The “later copy” began with Tiglath-pileser III stating that he was the son of Ashur-nirari (V) with the intention of making the Assyrian kings look like a long line of unified rulers from one continuous ruling throne. Modern scholars have uncritically fell for this ruse and have accepted it as real history in order to defeat the testimony of Scripture. This is the same thing that Manetho and Berossos did with Egyptian and Babylonian king lists, respectively, which again threw modern scholarship off balance in their quest to demonstrate that the Bible is in error and therefore is nothing more than a pile of Hebrew myths.

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the king list that had been wrongly pieced together at this point and inserted another line of kings to make it look like there was only one ruling dynasty at a time.

Let us understand the family relationships of Tiglath-pileser. The oldest son of Adad-nirari II was Tukulti-Ninurta II, the brother of Tiglath-pileser III. After Tukulti-Ninurta II died in the year of 760 BCE, the succession should have gone directly to his younger brother Tiglath-pileser III. But instead, the son of Tukulti-Ninurta II, a usurper by the name of Ashur-nasir-apli II, seized the throne.

Then, in the 15th year of Ashur-nasir-apli's total 25-year reign, Tiglath-pileser III broke away from the kings of Calah and established a new dynasty in Nineveh. The year was 745 BCE. From that point on, there was another parallel dynasty now ruling from Nineveh, along with the dynasty in the city of Calah.⁷³¹

Thus, it was King Ashur-nasir-apli II who was the real King Pul of the Bible. The Bible plainly confirms that the two kings were separate people:

And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of **Pul** [Ashur-nasir-apli II] king of Assyria, **AND** the spirit of Tilgathpileses [Tiglath-pileser III] king of Assyria, and he (TP III) carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day (I Chron 5:26, KJV, emphasis mine).

First of all, the word “AND” that is emphasized in this quote plainly mentions two different Assyrian kings — not two different names for the same Assyrian King, *viz.*, “Pul” and “Tiglath-pileser”. It is time that the notion that Tiglath-pileser III and King “Pul” were the same person be shattered once and for all. King “Pul” was the Assyrian king during the time when Menahem was king [770-760 BCE] (2 Kgs 15:17-19). But Tiglath-pileser III was the king of Assyria during the reign of the Israelite King Pekah [758- 738 BCE] (2 Kgs 15:27-29). That the dates do not align should have been enough to scuttle the entire idea that “Pul” and Tiglath-pileser III were one in the same persons.

Of course, Assyriologists must reject this explanation, since they refuse to believe that the Assyrians had co-reigning kings or even parallel dynasties ruling from different capitals. Yet this passage alone proves the fact that they are abundantly wrong — all rationalizations against this view notwithstanding!

A. P. McIntyre's insightful commentary is here worthy of consideration:

Nowhere in the Bible is a foreign king referred to by more than one name. And yet, both the name Pul and Tiglath-Pileser are used several times. This is a clear indication that we are dealing with two different people. Even more precise is the statement given in I Chron. 5:26 which says “And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul, king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria ...” Is there any possible way that this statement could mean something other

⁷³⁰ D. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), 1:294 §822. This inscription was found on an inscribed brick said to be of the palace of Tiglath-pileser III. Whether it has been correctly ascribed to this king is not certain. See also J. A. Brinkman, “Comments on the Nassouhi Kinglist and the Assyrian Kinglist Tradition,” *Orientalia* 42 (1973): 312.

⁷³¹ The precedent for a parallel dynasty ruling alongside the house of Calah was already set during the time of Tiglath-pileser I, who had four sons, Ash[arid]apilekur, Ashurbelkala, Shamshi-Adad IV, and Enlilnasir (II). After the first two sons reigned, the throne was passed to the son of the second son, Eriba Adad (II), rather than to Shamshi-Adad IV. Eriba Adad (II) only reigned but two years, when Shamshi-Adad IV and Enlilnasir (II) had a coup and seized the throne. Shamshi-Adad IV then deposed his brother Enlil-nasir (II), who started his own dynasty in the city of Ashur in 930 BCE. See also Peter James, “Co-regencies and parallel dynasties” in *Centuries of Darkness*, 299-304.

than there were two different people involved? Well, yes, of course! You see, our Bible scholars have found another error in the Bible! They explain that this pesky little word “and” which come between “Assyria” and “the spirit of” is wrong. It should be (according to them) “EVEN”. To them, this “proves” that Tiglath-Pileser and Pul were the same person. Comparing Bible history with secular history certainly is easy when all you have to do is change any word in the Bible that doesn’t fit.⁷³²

McIntyre further noted:

The sequence of events given in the Bible is more evidence that Pul and Tiglath-Pileser were different personalities. The Bible account of II Kings 15:19-20 shows that Pul came against Israel but that Menahem bought him off with a big bribe and that Pul left Israel without looting or pillaging any of the cities. But, II Kings 15:29 shows that Tiglath-Pileser came against Israel later, during the reign of Pekah, and did much damage and destruction in the land. Also, II Chron. 28:20-21 shows that Tiglath-Pileser came against Judah in the reign of Ahaz and Ahaz bought him off with a bribe. Since Pekah and Ahaz were contemporaries of Tiglath-Pileser and Menahem was not, it is impossible that Tiglath-Pileser was Pul. The primary reason though, that we must conclude that he was not Pul is because the correct chronology of Israel shows that Menahem died 8 years before Tiglath-Pileser came to power in Assyria.⁷³³

This whole idea of believing that the Biblical author of this passage was ever so concerned in informing its readers that Tiglath-pileser also had a nickname that he needed to pass on is nonsense. The nickname explanation certainly has all the suspicious earmarks of a deliberate attempt to make this passage say something that supports a theory that is agenda-driven.

Nevertheless, most modern Bible translations have prostrated themselves to the modern god of secular scholarship by rendering this verse in such a way as to forcibly impose the idea that this verse is only talking about one king of Assyria. Some of these translations are so outrageously prejudicial to the idea that this is talking about two kings that they have removed the word “and” and replaced it with either the English “even” or “that is” or some other direct statement that Pul and Tiglath-pileser were one and the same person. Just look at some of these erroneous renderings:

New International Version (©2011):

So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria (that is, Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria).

International Standard Version (©2012):

So the God of Israel incited King Pul of Assyria (also known as King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria).

New American Standard Bible (©1995):

So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul, king of Assyria, EVEN the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria.

New Living Translation (©2007):

So the God of Israel caused King Pul of Assyria (also known as Tiglath-pileser).

NET Bible (©2006):

So the God of Israel stirred up King Pul of Assyria (that is, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria).

⁷³² McIntyre, *Bible 7, History 0*, 70.

⁷³³ Ibid., 71-72.

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GOD'S WORD® Translation (©1995):

Then the God of Israel led King Pul of Assyria (King Tiglath Pilneser of Assyria).

These examples are not literal translations by any stretch of the imagination. They are blatant corruptions of the text as any linguistic scholar should condemn as such! Indeed, by changing the meaning of this verse to make it seem like Tiglath-pileser and Pul were one in the same person, Edwin R. Thiele, and many other modern-day scholars, find this slight of hand as a windfall opportunity to deliberately change the chronology of the Israelite kings, thus moving the reign of Menahem down in order to make Tiglath-pileser's reign coincide with the reign of King Menahem.

And true to form, Thiele's insidious argument sums up this view:

As the verse is now translated in English, it is ambiguous and grammatically incorrect, for the singular pronoun "he" cannot stand as the antecedent for the plural "Pul and Tiglath-pileser," but if the plural "they" were used it would not agree with the singular Hebrew verb. Thus this verse, instead of conveying a wrong idea concerning Pul and Tiglath-pileser, actually becomes a valuable early documentary authority for the identification of Pul with Tiglath-pileser III.⁷³⁴

Nonsense! Thiele is hoping that no one will notice the fact that 1 Chronicles 5:6 already specifically singled out only one king, viz., Tiglath-pileser, as being the one who "carried away" the Reubenites (v. 6), the Gadites (v. 11), and half of the tribe of Manasseh (v. 18).

Does it even make any sense that verse 26 now introduces a nickname, as well as his full name, when we weren't given any heads up that Tiglath-pileser III even had a nickname? If this verse is about a nickname, it is about the nickname of another Assyrian king, viz., Ashur-nasir-apli (II) — not his uncle Tiglath-pileser III!

Also, the Hebrew text itself uses the direct object pointer "et" before both names separately, specifically indicating that more than one person was being referred to. And finally:

Were they the same man, the verse would only have the title "king of Assyria" once, reading "And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul, that is, Tiglath pileser king of Assyria."⁷³⁵

Valid point! Why did the author of this passage feel the need to repeat the phrase "king of Assyria" after both of these names if, in fact, he was merely trying to inform us that Tiglath-pileser supposedly had a nickname that he wished to pass on to us for who knows for whatever reason.

The facts that we must face are these. In the year of 761/60 BCE the Assyrian King Tukulti-Ninurta II, brother of Tiglath-pileser III, died, leaving two possible heirs to the throne. It should have been expected that Tukulti-Ninurta II's brother, Tiglath-pileser III, should have succeeded the throne. But it is obvious that the son of Tukulti-Ninurta (II), Ashur-nasir-apli (II) challenged his uncle's right to the throne and apparently won the day — at least for the time being.

Let's understand that 1 Chronicles 5:26 (when properly translated and understood) supports this premise. The year 745 BCE is when Tiglath-pileser III finally established his own dynastic throne in Nineveh, parallel with the dynasty of Ashur-nasir-apli (II) in Calah. Modern-day scholars certainly reject any idea that there were now two parallel Assyrian dynasties beginning in 745 BCE

⁷³⁴ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 92-93. Thiele was a master at winning arguments that sound so good on the surface, but leave out enough facts that few would be able to detect the problems he subtly covers up.

⁷³⁵ Jones, *Chronology*, 172-73.

because they need a single, continuous Assyrian dynasty going back as far as possible to coincide the bogus Egyptian chronology.⁷³⁶

The last year of King Menahem of Israel just so happened to be the very same year as the accession year of the Assyrian King Pul (Ashur-nasir-apli [II]). That year was 760 BCE. What an amazing agreement with the facts of the Bible! And, indeed, the first thing that Ashur-nasir-apli II did upon his accession was to thrust into Israel and come against King Menahem:

King Pul of Assyria [Ashur-nasir-apli II] came against the land. Menahem gave Pul [Ashur-nasir-apli II] a thousand talents of silver, so that he might help him confirm his hold on the royal power. Menahem exacted the money from Israel, that is, from all the wealthy, fifty shekels of silver from each one, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and did not stay there in the land (2 Kgs 15:19-20).

Next, a few verses below, we find that it is now Tiglath-pileser who is on the scene “in the days of King Pekah of Israel”:

In the days of King Pekah of Israel, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and captured [various cities of Israel] ... and he carried the people captive to Assyria (2 Kgs 15:29).

Notice that this was not the same king as mentioned during the days of Menahem. In the days of Menahem, it was King Pul (Ashur-nasir-apli II). But now, in the days of Pekah, it was a different king altogether, *viz.* Tiglath-pileser III.

Modern scholars will counter this explanation with the following objection. Supposedly, there is an Assyrian inscription that claims that Tiglath-pileser III received tribute from Menahem. It reads:

I imposed upon them tribute]. [As for Menahem I ov]erwhelmed him [like a snowstorm] and he ... fled like a bird, alone, [and bowed to my feet(?)]. I returned him to his place [and imposed tribute upon him to wit:] gold, silver, linen garments with multicolored trimmings, ... great ... [I re]ceived from him. Israel (lit.: “Omri-Land” *bît Humria*) ... all its inhabitants (and) their possessions I led to Assyria. They overthrew their king Pekah (*Pa-qa-ha*) and I placed Hoshea (*A-u-si-*’) as king over them. I received from them 10 talents of gold, 1,000(?) talents of silver as their [tri]bute and brought them to Assyria.⁷³⁷

This inscription can hardly be presented as evidence that Menahem gave tribute to Tiglath-pileser III. Why? Because the name “Menahem” has been supplied by the translator who introduced his own bias into the text. The name “Menahem” is not in the original text. And the translator biased his translation based upon unproven, modern scholarly theories. Once again, we have a clear example of modern scholars using their theories to inject into original sources a false concept, then hold up that tampered source as evidence to support their false theories. If this is not a prime example of circular reasoning, pray tell, what is? The playing field is uneven and an unsuspecting lay person has not a chance to see through this kind of deception that goes on all the time.

⁷³⁶ It is one of modern-day scholar’s contentions that their chronological schemes are correct because of the seeming tie in with the Assyrian King Ashur-uballit I and dynasty 18 of Egypt. But the fact that the Assyrian chronology must be lowered due to the reconstruction herein proposed only reinforces the fact that Dynasty 18 of Egypt must also follow suit and be lowered accordingly. Thus, there can be no objection at all on this matter. In the next volume we will see that the Assyrian King Ashur-uballit I should be correctly dated to 863-827 BCE and was indeed a contemporary of Akhnaton (871-854 BCE) and his son Tutankhamen (851-841 BCE).

⁷³⁷ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 283- 84.

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The fact of the matter is that the original name of this king has been damaged and lost to us. If the name was Menahem, then we have a problem — not only with the chronology — but in the fact that in the middle of a discussion about Menahem, suddenly we are thrust some 20 years forward and must now be talking about another king, Pekah.

And when did Tiglath-pileser III overwhelm Menahem to the point that he supposedly fled, but then was restored to power? Even the context of what is being said makes no sense.

Remember, it was in the days of Pekah that Tiglath-pileser “... carried the people captive to Assyria” (2 Kgs 15:29), just as this text says, “... all its inhabitants (and) possessions I led to Assyria ... and brought them to Assyria.” This was the first captivity of the people of Israel into Assyria. The overthrowing of Pekah occurred in the year 738 BCE. Therefore, the missing name could not be Menahem at all — it most assuredly must be King Pekah!

But, let us ask, how did scholars come up with the name “Menahem” in the first place? Because there is another inscription, supposedly attributed to Tiglath-pileser III, that states the following:

I received the tribute of Kustaspi, the Kummuhite, Rezin, the Damascene, **Mena-hem, the Samarian**, Hiram, the Tyrian, *etc.*,⁷³⁸

Okay, so here we have an inscription that mentions a Meneham paying tribute to an Assyrian king. But, wait a minute, which Assyrian king are we talking about is the important question that we must address here. Since the king is unnamed, then modern-day scholars have the luxury of being free to supply whatever name suits their pre-conceived chronology. And true to form, it is modern-day Assyriologists who have applied this inscription to Tiglath-pileser III. They have done this because they need you to accept the idea that King “Pul” mentioned in the Bible and King “Tiglath-pileser” are one and the same person. It is the position of this author that they were not one and the same person. Why? From the Biblical evidence, we know the following facts. The book of *Second Kings* itself dispels this theory, as already explained above.

However, since we do not have a list of Syrian kings that was handed down to us from the usual sources (monuments, classical historians, *etc.*), modern historians reconstruct a list to make it come out as they wish.

We do not know how long the Syrian King Rezin had been on the throne during this time. He was either the son or grandson of Ben-Hadad who reigned many years earlier, so he could have been on the throne for decades. But what we do know is that the Israelite king in this inscription is not Pekah, but Menahem [770-760 BCE], who preceded Tiglath-pileser III. Therefore, this inscription has been misappropriated to Tiglath-pileser III and should fall under King Pul, *vis-a-vis*, Ashur-nasir-apli II. By placing this inscription in the time of Tiglath-pileser III, all scholars have done is to force Menahem’s reign downward in order to accommodate a false understanding of Assyrian chronology at the expense of Biblical chronology. This is just another example of the kind of tampering that is used in order to maintain a chronological system that cannot be sustained in the light of Biblical facts.

11. In the 50th year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekahiah succeeded his father Menahem in Israel and reigned for only two years (2 Kgs 15:23). In Pekahiah’s second year he was assassinated

⁷³⁸ William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr., *The Context of Scripture: Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 285, 287 (emphasis the author’s).

by Pekah (2 Kgs 15:23-26). This occurred in the 52nd year of Azariah. And this is exactly what the text informs us (2 Kgs 15:27), as well as $50 + 2 = 52$.

Nevertheless, this information presents a problem with what ensues. We have just confirmed that Pekah began to rule in Azariah's 52nd year. That was Azariah's last year of reign. Azariah was then succeeded by Jotham. But instead of the Bible saying that Jotham came to the throne in the second year of Pekahiah (the year that Azariah died), it says it was in the second year of Pekah, son of Remaliah. That would push out Jotham's accession another two years and leave a two-year gap between Azariah and Jotham, which is assuredly not indicated in the Scripture, nor was intended.⁷³⁹

There can be no other solution than to declare that the text here has confused Pekah with Pekahiah, and must be corrected to read that Jotham came to the throne in the second year of Pekahiah — not Pekah! The similarity of the names gives us sufficient reason to suspect that the original record had been mixed up by scribal error. But there is more proof to support this view.

There are two other cross synchronizations that absolutely confirm the fact that we are dealing with a scribal error in the Masoretic text. Pekah reigned for 20 years (2 Kgs 15:27), after which he was killed by Hoshea. Since Pekah of Israel reigned for 20 years and Jotham of Judah began his reign in the same year as Pekah, then when Hoshea, who succeeded Pekah's 20-year reign, came to the throne it would have been exactly 20 years since Jotham ascended his throne as well, even though Jotham is reported to have only reigned for 16 years (2 Kgs 15:32). And 2 Kings itself tells us this very thing:

Then Hoshea son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah, attacked him, and killed him; he reigned in place of him, in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah (2 Kgs 15:30).

What we are observing here is an extraordinary thing. It is almost as if the Bible is self-correcting its own error by giving us this cross-check. Also, since Jotham actually reigned for 16 years, and was succeeded by his son Ahaz, then we would expect that the cross synchronization of Ahaz of Judah would fall within the 16th/17th year of Pekah of Israel. And true to form, that is exactly where the text places his accession:

In the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, King Ahaz son of Jotham of Judah began to reign (2 Kgs 16:1).

So, these two synchronisms definitely prove that Jotham came to power in the second year of Pekahiah — not in the second year of Pekah!

12. The Bible next tells us that King Pekah was murdered by Hoshea (2 Kgs 15:30). And it is at this point that we enter into one of the biggest areas of confusion in the entire history of the Israelite kings. Not only is there confusion in the Biblical record, but we have problems with the Assyrian records as well. And it is here that we must throw away the standard textbooks on this period, because they are of no help whatsoever in trying to understand what was happening during this time. In order to properly reconstruct this period, we must go back to the complicated chronology of the Assyrian kings.

First of all, the Biblical record states that Hoshea slew Pekah in the 20th year of Jotham (2 Kgs 15:30-32). But then, later on, it states that Hoshea came to the throne in the 12th year of Ahaz

⁷³⁹ It is amazing that no one ever addresses this problem in all of the literature reviewed by this author. Of course, most chronologies hide this problem in the fact that they have made the chronology of Israel compressed with over-lapping reigns, so that this problem is nearly impossible to detect in those low chronologies.

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(1 Kgs 17:1). This represents a difference of nine years between these two events. This would suggest a nine-year interregnum, which means a vacuum of leadership for that nine-year period. But are we to believe that during those nine years there was in fact no king ruling in Israel? Are we to believe that the Assyrians would not have set up a puppet government? This is an especially important question to consider when trying to unravel the intricacies of this period.

The Bible is silent as to who was either the king or acting king of Israel during this time. But he is identified in the Assyrian records. Let us come to understand the intriguing events that must be considered in trying to piece together this important time period.

Remember that the Assyrian Empire was divided among two rival dynasties during this time. As we have seen above Tiglath-pileser III established his own throne in the 16th year of his nephew, Ashur-nasir-apli II (King Pul of the Bible), viz., in 745 BCE. Ashur-nasir-apli II continued to reign until the year of 736/35 BCE. In that year he was succeeded by his son, Shalmaneser III.

The record of Shalmaneser III begins as follows:

(I am) Shalmaneser, the legitimate king, the king of the world, the king without rival, the “Great Dragon,” overlord of all the princes, ... the son of Ashurnasir-pal, king of the world, king of Assyria, (grand)son of Tukulti-Ninurta, likewise king of the world, king of Assyria ...”⁷⁴⁰

Wait a minute. Why did Shalmaneser feel the need to state that he was “the legitimate king?” Was there a legitimacy question involved with his rulership? Why did he feel the need to authenticate his credentials in such a bold way as he did here? Certainly, he was the legitimate king, or was he? It is almost as if we are witnessing a candid admission that Shalmaneser’s legitimacy had been challenged by some rival king. Was his legitimacy threatened by another throne in Assyria that also claimed royal legitimacy?

Did Shalmaneser consider Tiglath-pileser an illegitimate king? If so, then why did he find it necessary to claim that he was king “without rival,” if, in fact, there was indeed another king of Assyria who was a rival? Why did he have to state that he was above “all the princes?” Who were the other princes? And why did he establish his legitimacy through his genealogy only back as far as his grandfather, Tukulti-Ninurta (who was actually the brother of Tiglath-pileser III, and not back as far as Ashur-dan II, the father of Tiglath-pileser’s father? That he could not do! Why?

It is obvious that Shalmaneser III wanted to show the legitimacy of his grandfather Tukulti-Ninurta II, who was the one who took Tiglath-pileser’s III rightful place on the throne of Assyria. Had he gone back to Ashur-dan II, then he would have destroyed his own argument, because that was the same claim that Tiglath-pileser could have made. Thus, the two most powerful kings of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser III, and Shalmaneser III, were actually ruling side by side from Nineveh and Calah, respectively. Modern scholars will say that this is preposterous, but is it?

Shalmaneser III came to power in the third year of the interregnum of Israel (736/35 BCE). Then in year six of Shalmaneser (730/29 BCE), he fights a great battle at a place called Qarqar and mentions the defeated king of Israel as “Ahab, the Israelite.” This three-year period plus six years agrees exactly with the nine years of this so-called “interregnum” in the Israelite Kingdom at this time. Such an exacting number of nine years is a reaffirmation of our chronological reconstruction!

⁷⁴⁰ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 276.

Scholars try to make the argument that the Assyrian records somehow confirm the existence of the Ahab of the Bible mentioned in 1 Kings 16:27-29. But such an argument certainly does not hold water when looking at the facts of Biblical chronology and the political situation.

The Ahab of Scripture actually reigned from 919-898 BCE. Yet, Shalmaneser III is said to have reigned from 859-824 BCE. So right off the bat, the facts are that Ahab and Shalmaneser could not have been contemporaries. Thus, the dilemma that scholars put themselves in gave them no other choice than to strip off a half-century from Biblical chronology, and voilà, problem solved. But scholars still had another embarrassing dilemma on their hands that they could not deny, which was a glaring discrepant political situation with the Biblical record and the Assyrian records. This is an extremely important point that must be addressed

First of all, the Ahab of Scripture never once sent troops to assist the Arameans against the Assyrians. Indeed, he was at constant war with the Arameans. Anyone who knows anything about the Ahab of Scripture should know better than to ignore this important fact. Second of all, there is nothing in the Biblical account that tells us that Ahab fought against the Assyrians in any famous battle at “Qarqar.” If the Battle of Qarqar was fought against Shalmaneser III, we are left with total silence about such a fact in Scripture. The answer is staring us right in the face. The Ahab of Scripture never did fight in any such famous battle, pure and simple! So, the Ahab of the Assyrian records obviously must be a different Ahab altogether.

The only time that Israel was ever in league with Aram in its entire history was at the time of King Pekah — not during the time of Ahab the king of Israel! In the time of the Biblical Ahab, Aram was a powerful confederation that was not threatened by any Assyrian aggression. Yet, scholars today pass over this important fact and proceed with their unsubstantiated theories to the contrary. This is because they have stacked the different ruling dynasties of the Assyrians end to end as they did with Egyptian dynasties in order to push history as far back as they can in order to demonstrate that it is the Biblical chronology that is wrong and has to be realigned with the faulty reconstruction of Assyrian history. Yet, earlier scholars could see that another Ahab must be the Ahab of the Assyrian records.⁷⁴¹

Therefore, to understand who the Ahab was in the days of Shalmaneser III we have to look squarely in the days of King Pekah. Here are the facts. In 2 Kings 16 we see that in the last days of King Pekah of Israel, Ahaz ascended the throne in the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Additionally, we see that Pekah of Israel and Rezin of Aram unite to attack King Ahaz of Judah. Ahaz, in return

... sent messengers to King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, saying, “I am your servant and your son. Come up, and rescue me from the hand of the king of Aram and from the hand of the king of Israel, who are attacking me.” Ahaz also took the silver and gold found in the house of the LORD and in the treasures of the king’s house, and sent a present to the king of Assyria. The king of Assyria listened to him; the king of Assyria marched up against Damascus, and took it, carrying its people captive to Kir; then he killed Rezin (2 Kgs 16:7-9).

⁷⁴¹ George Smith proposed the following: “I would suggest instead of these chronological alterations, that some of the Biblical names in the Assyrian annals on which they are based, **either do not refer to the kings supposed** or are errors on the part of the Assyrians. If we allow that the Ahab and Jehu mentioned in the Assyrian records may not be the Ahab and Jehu of the Bible, we are not under the necessity of altering the chronology of either nation in order to make the Assyrian notices fit the time of the Hebrew monarchs,” *The Assyrian Eponym Canon* (London: Samuel Bagster & Sons, 1875), 154, emphasis the author’s. Well said! Such remarkable insight back in 1875 is a refreshing comparison to the nonsensical chronological reconstructions of modern-day scholarship that would never even consider such an idea.

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This Ahab sent 2000 chariots and 10,000-foot soldiers to the Aramean coalition led by a Hadad-ezer (III?). The fact that both Tiglath-pileser III and Shalmaneser III were able to unitedly smash this opposition in the year of 730/29 BCE, thus putting an end to this second Ahab, is testimony that at last, we have history that now makes better sense than ever before. And, of course, the chronological synchronizations here are so exact that it confirms the correctness of the history of this complicated period.

Who is the Boastful Assyrian King?

Next, the Assyrian records, according to the latest (and best?) translation, states:

I carried off [to] Assyria the land of Bit-Humria (Israel), [... its] “auxiliary [army,]” [...] all of its people, [...] [I/they killed] Pekah, their king, and I installed Hoshea [as king] over them. I received from them 10 talents of gold, x talents of silver, [with] their [possessions] and [I car]ried them [to Assyria].⁷⁴²

Here we see that it was an Assyrian king installing Hoshea over Israel, which makes Hoshea a vassal to the Assyrians. So, who was the Assyrian king here doing the speaking in this inscription? Most scholars have simply assumed that this text should be assigned to Tiglath-pileser III. But Scripture tells us that the Assyrian king that Hoshea became vassal to was a king by the name of Shalmaneser (2 Kgs 17:3). So, now we have opened up the possibility that the text could also be that of Shalmaneser III, a possibility that no modern scholar would ever accept, of course. However, it even makes better sense that it was Shalmaneser III considering the testimony of just what was presented. Hoshea killed Pekah in 738 BCE — the very year that Tiglath-pileser (and Shalmaneser III) campaigned in Israel. But nine years later in 727 BCE, instead of allowing Hoshea to remain on the throne, Tiglath-pileser decided to install another local prince to become a vassal to the Assyrians, whose name happened to be “Ahab.” He was not installed as a king, but a sort of acting governor while he began the process of exiling the population to Assyria.⁷⁴³ That is why this “Ahab” was not listed in the Biblical sources as a king.

Obviously, the Israelite chroniclers could not recognize the legitimacy of this Ahab (II) as a rightful king of Israel (or governor), installed by the Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser III, so they simply ignored those nine years as a blank in Israelite history. Those missing nine years in Israelite history are simply not addressed and were considered an interregnum. But then exactly nine years later, Shalmaneser III fought this treacherous Ahab, who had been installed by Tiglath-pileser at the battle of Qarqar, in the year of 730/729 BCE, in which Ahab II was killed. Everything fits exactly once we pay attention to the actual facts, and do not disrupt the true chronology of the Bible.

Thus, it was Shalmaneser III who next installed Hoshea in that very same year (which was the 12th year of Ahaz of Judah, 2 Kgs 17:1). So, it makes more sense that the above Assyrian text applies to Shalmaneser III, rather than Tiglath-pileser III. And the beauty of all of this is that it so perfectly fits with the correct chronology of the Bible, that the inertia of such a construction demands us to accept it as historical fact.

⁷⁴² Hallo and Younger, *The Context of Scripture*, 288; Pritchard, *ANET*, 284.

⁷⁴³ Hoshea was installed by the Israelites as a king, and affirmed by the Assyrians as an acceptable puppet (2 Kgs 17:3-5). Ahab II, on the other hand, was more or less a despised administrator of Assyrian affairs in Samaria, and was not recognized as a king in the Scriptural record.

Again, at this point, the chronology of Israel and Judah realigns itself with a synchronization that is truly remarkable. Indeed, in the 16th year of Ahaz of Judah his son Hezekiah succeeded him. According to the synchronisms established thus far; this would be the 3rd/4th year of Hoshea. And that is exactly where the Bible places this event.⁷⁴⁴

13. Tiglath-pileser III died in the year of 727/26 BCE. His successor is thought to have been a son who took on the throne name of Shalmaneser (V). Scholars believe that this king was the one who began the siege of Samaria in 722 BCE. But he is not the Shalmaneser of the Biblical record that began that siege. Again, that Shalmaneser can be none other than Shalmaneser III.

In fact, consider the fact that Shalmaneser V of the king lists may have never even existed — a phantom of the later contrived Assyrian king lists. The greater likelihood is that upon the death of Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser III assumed the thrones of both Calah and Nineveh for a period of five years. Then, in the year of 722 BCE, the son of Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon II assumed the throne of his father. And it was in that very year that Sargon II and Shalmaneser III together began a three-year campaign against Samaria.⁷⁴⁵

Once again, we have to ask, how could Shalmaneser V have accomplished a three-year siege against Samaria after his own death, and then, as Josephus recorded, attack Tyre, which included a five-year siege of the famous “Emporium”? Shalmaneser V, of course, could not have accomplished any of those things if he had died at the beginning of the fall of Samaria in 722. Let us investigate this problem further.

“Shalmaneser” and the Fall of Samaria

2 Kings 18:9 informs us the following:

In the **fourth year of King Hezekiah**, which was **the seventh year of King Hoshea** son of Elah of Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against Samaria, besieged it, and at the end of three years, took it. In the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel, Samaria was taken (emphasis mine).

This important verse explicitly tells us that the northern kingdom of Israel, ruled from Samaria, under the Assyrian puppet king, Hoshea, and was taken after a three-year siege conducted by an Assyrian King identified as a “Shalmaneser.” Chronologically, this verse gives us explicit synchronizations between Hezekiah, king of Judah, and Hoshea, king of Israel. However, by Biblical chronology that has been established thus far, these three years were 722, 721, 720 BCE.

Historians tell us that the Shalmaneser mentioned by the Bible is none other than someone known as Shalmaneser V, who is reported to have reigned for five years from 727-722 BCE. But again, it must be asked, how could such a king who had died in 722 BCE be considered to have conducted a three-year campaign beyond his death? Scholars have recognized this problem and have had recourse to rewriting history in order to save their foolish reconstruction of Assyrian history.

It is important that we investigate this further, for now, we are on to something.

Look at how modern scholars have tampered with the Assyrian records:

⁷⁴⁴ 2 Kgs 18:1 places the accession of Hezekiah in the third year of Hoshea, whereas Josephus (*Ant.*, 9.13.1 §260, Whiston, 263) places it in the fourth year. Either way, this year corresponds to 726/25 BCE.

⁷⁴⁵ Is it not strange that the records have both a Shalmaneser and a Sargon destroying Israel? So, if Shalmaneser died in the process and Sargon finished the job, then why is credit given to Shalmaneser?

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On the twenty-fifth day of the month Tebet Shalmaneser (V) ascended the throne in Assyria <and Akkad>. He ravaged *Samaria*.⁷⁴⁶

Note that the word *Samaria* is italicized. Serious students must question why? Shouldn't we have learned by now that italicized words mean that these words were not in the original text, but were supplied by the translator? The actual word in the account has been a matter of fierce debate among scholars. It reads in the Akkadian: *Sá-ma/ba-ra- 'in*. Grayson notes:

The long debated problem of whether or not this is Samaria has been recently discussed by Tadmor,⁷⁴⁷ who came to the conclusion that it is Samaria.⁷⁴⁸

Oh my, let me guess. So, the debate over the meaning of this word is now supposedly a settled matter, even though it would thus represent a form for "Samaria" that has never been evidenced in any other reading. Hmm, I wonder what the deciding factor was? Well, since the Bible says that a Shalmaneser came against Samaria, and here we have an Assyrian Record saying something similar occurred at some point in Shalmaneser's reign, let's put two and two together. The only problem is that the only evidence of any kind that we have as to the year in Shalmaneser's reign that such an event occurred is found within the limmu lists:

| | | | |
|-----|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 725 | Mahde of Nineveh | | to [...] |
| 724 | Assur-semu-ani | [of Kili]zi | to [...] |
| 723 | Shalmaneser | king [of Assyria] | to [...] |
| 722 | Ninurta-ilaya | [...] |] |
| 721 | Nabu-taris | [...] | t]i |
| 720 | Ashur-nirka-da | [...] |] ⁷⁴⁹ |

Do notice that for three years in a row, 725, 724, and 723 BCE there were expeditions to some unspecified country, the last one identified with Shalmaneser. Yet, according to Biblical chronology, the three years for the siege on Samaria occurred from 722, 721, and 720 BCE. Obviously, this cannot refer to the same event *viz.*, the siege of Samaria. Why? Because the dates obviously do not match up. Scholars then realized that if they simply made the unknown country to be Samaria, then that would alleviate the problem of Shalmaneser V conducting a three-year campaign against Samaria three years beyond his death. But the only problem standing in the way of that theory was that it did not harmonize with Biblical chronology. But, pray tell, when did that fact ever be a problem with secular historians? So, here is what we are up against. If it is a matter of Biblical chronology versus the assumed Assyrian chronology, then there isn't the slightest hesitation for scholars to choose the latter over the former. By simply moving the siege from 722-720 BCE to 725-723 BCE the enigma would indeed be resolved (for modern-day scholars, at least). All that scholars had to do was simply insert the word "Samaria" into the lacuna, and, voilà, the supposed enigma immediately evaporates into thin air. Modern history students were then none the wiser (but should be now).

So then, when Daniel David Luckenbill, later on, published his version of the *limmu* lists, here's how he devilishly reported it:

⁷⁴⁶ Chronicle 1:27-28 in Grayson, *Chronicles*, 73.

⁷⁴⁷ See Hayim Tadmor, "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 12.1 (1958): 39-40.

⁷⁴⁸ Grayson, *Chronicles*, 73.

⁷⁴⁹ Smith, *Assyrian Eponym Canon*, 65.

| | | | |
|-------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| [725] | Mahdê | (governor) of Nineveh | against [Samaria] |
| [724] | Assur-ishmeani | (governor) of kakzi | against [Samaria] |
| [723] | Shalmaneser | King of Assyria | against [Samaria] ⁷⁵⁰ |

Notice now how cleverly the word “[Samaria]” was inserted into this source text. But there is simply no valid justification for so doing, other than trying to deliberately rewrite history to make it comply with a modern-day false chronology. Nevertheless, because of this sleight-of-hand, Edwin R. Thiele immediately seized upon this fudged report and uncritically (as well as all of academia) adopted it into his chronological schemes. Notice Thiele’s reasoning for so doing:

The Biblical record, moreover, tells us that Shalmaneser came against Samaria and that the siege of that city lasted three years. In the Eponym Chronicle no campaign is recorded for 726 — the king was in the land. And again, in 722 no campaign was recorded; only the repair of a temple is mentioned. Only three years are left — 725, 724, and 723. In 725 Shalmaneser was engaged in a campaign against some city or kingdom the name of which has been lost. Again, for 724, the event of the year was simply “against,” with once more the name being lost. And for a third successive year, 723, he again went “against,” with once more the name being lost. What was the name of the place or places that he went against in 725, 724, and 723? At some time during his reign he went against Samaria. And in 725, 724, 723, he went against some place or places, the names of which have disappeared from the record. According to our reconstructed scheme of Old Testament chronology, Shalmaneser came against Samaria in 725, 724, and 723. So if the entry for those years is to be restored in the Eponym Chronicle, what should that restoration be? We have every reason to agree with Luckenbill and Olmstead⁷⁵¹ that “Samaria” is the correct restoration.⁷⁵²

Wow! Unbelievable! A deliberate falsification right before our eyes! Indeed, even the statements of Sargon have been discarded, who was the one who conducted the mop-up operations in the two subsequent years after Shalmaneser made his initial attack in 722 BCE.

But wait, there is even more evidence that modern-day scholars have blown off concerning this problem. Indeed, here is the real evidence that scuttles the entire idea that a Shalmaneser [V] was the conqueror of ancient Israel. Ready? According to the ancient Jewish historian Josephus, he quoted an earlier Greek historian, Menander, who tells us that after Shalmaneser conducted his campaign against Samaria he further carried out other campaigns years later:

When Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria, had it told him, that [Hoshea] the king of Israel had sent privately to So, the king of Egypt, desiring his assistance against him, he was very angry, and made an expedition against Samaria, in the seventh year of the reign of Hoshea; but when he was not admitted [into the city] by the king, he besieged Samaria three years, and took it by force in the ninth year of the reign of Hoshea, and in the seventh year of Hezekiah, king of Jerusalem, and quite demolished the government of the Israelites, and transplanted all the people into Media and Persia, among whom he took king Hoshea alive.⁷⁵³

[Shalmaneser **afterward**] ... invaded all Syria and Phoenicia in a hostile manner. The name of this king is also set down in the archives of Tyre, for he made an expedition against Tyre in the reign of Eluleus. “...This continued for **five years**; and still the Tyrians bore the siege, and drank of the water they had out of the wells they dug.” And this is what is written in the Tyrian archives concerning Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria.⁷⁵⁴

⁷⁵⁰ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, 2:437.

⁷⁵¹ A. T. Olmstead, “The Fall of Samaria,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 21 (1904-05): 179-82.

⁷⁵² Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 144-45.

⁷⁵³ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.14.1 [§§277-78] (Whiston, 264).

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The fact that here we have a Shalmaneser who went on to other campaigns after his supposed death is a glaring discrepancy in what modern scholars maintain. How could such a remarkable fact be ignored? Nevertheless, it is flagrantly ignored. However, the approach taken by this study is (1) Biblical chronology cannot be compromised; (2) history must agree with the Biblical facts, and; (3) history must make sense. What modern scholars propose violates all three of these criteria.

The only way that we can come to a proper solution is to think outside of the box in which modern-day scholars have put themselves into (and everyone else). We have to solve the problem in the same comprehensive manner that Immanuel Velikovsky solved the problem with identifying the pharaoh Shishak who invaded Israel in the days of Rehoboam was in fact, Thutmose III.

The *lackluster* King Shalmaneser V accomplished none of the things that Menander claimed. And he certainly could not have accomplished these things after he was dead, now, could he? This so-called Shalmaneser V may be an entire phantom to fill in the false king lists who knew that there was some Shalmaneser who lived at this time. Indeed, where are the annals of this Shalmaneser V? There are none. Where are the images of this king? There are none. The only text that scholars have attributed to him is from some fragment of a small cylinder (BM 38345):

[I am Shalmaneser], the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria, king of the four regions of the world, viceroy of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, son...., king of Assyria; most precious scion of Assyria, seed of royalty, of the eternal days ... of Borsippa, whose site (?) had been damaged by the violence of the mighty floods. ... its damage I repaired and strengthened its structure. ... May Nabû look upon that temple with delight, ...⁷⁵⁵

Strikingly, the name of this “Shalmaneser” was missing and was supplied by the translator. This king states that he was the “son of” is also illegible. But among all this braggadocio given here by this king, there is no mention of the greatest achievement of this king’s accomplishments which should have been the capture of Samaria. And we are not even sure that this one and only piece of text even applies to this so-called Shalmaneser V. In other words, there may never have been a Shalmaneser V.⁷⁵⁶ Or if it does apply to a Shalmaneser, is there anyone else who could fit the bill?

There was indeed a Shalmaneser who reigned at that time that does fit the bill; and that Shalmaneser is none other than Shalmaneser the Great, known as Shalmaneser III. He is the only king by that name that could have conducted a three-year campaign against Samaria, and then later on a five-year campaign against Tyre. Unfortunately, scholars have mis-dated his reign to 859-824 BCE, over a century before his actual reign. Of course, their objection will be that it would be impossible to dislodge the synchronisms that they have supposedly established with this king and the Israelite kings, Ahab and Jehu I, as well as Egypt. Now, what about the Jehu objection? Let’s understand.

In year 14 of Shalmaneser III’s reign, he sent 120,000 troops across the Euphrates to squash an insurrection that occurred along the Mediterranean coast:

In my **fourteenth year** of reign I mustered (the people) of the whole wide land, in countless numbers. With 120,000 of my soldiers I crossed the Euphrates at its

⁷⁵⁴ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.14.2 [§§283, 287] (Whiston, 264, author’s emphasis). The apocryphal *Book of Tobit* (Tobit 1:2, 13, 14, 16) also has Shalmaneser (Enemessar) living down until the days of Sennacherib. Tobit does not mention the intervening King Sargon, the father of Sennacherib.

⁷⁵⁵ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, 1:297 §830.

⁷⁵⁶ Another possibility is that Shalmaneser V may have actually been Sargon II, who changed his name from Shalmaneser to Sargon in order to distinguish himself from Shalmaneser III who was the one who initially attacked Samaria in 722 BCE. Sargon II is likewise another puzzling individual. This is what happens when the chronology is wrong.

flood. At that time Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhuleni of Hamath, together with 12 kings of the seacoast, the upper and the lower, mustered their numerous armies, of countless numbers (and) advanced against me. I battled with them. I defeated them their chariots, their cavalry, I destroyed, their weapons of war I took from them. To save their lives they fled.⁷⁵⁷

Unfortunately, the names of the twelve kings of the Syrian coalition were not named.⁷⁵⁸ Obviously, one of them had to have been the King of Samaria. In his year 15, Shalmaneser marched into other areas.⁷⁵⁹ Years 16 and 17 are silent in his annals but the Black Obelisk says that in his 16th year Shalmaneser went up against “the land of Namri.”⁷⁶⁰ Then in year 18 we read:

I crossed the Euphrates for the sixteenth time.... At that time I received the tribute of the men of Tyre, Sidon, and of Jehu, son of Omri.⁷⁶¹

This Jehu, who was specifically identified as a “Jehu, son of Omri,” certainly could not be the Jehu of the Bible. Typically, the father’s name is not given. Why here? Was it to distinguish this Jehu from a Jehu who had previously ruled in Israel? Obviously, this must be the case. But if this is so, then why wasn’t he directly mentioned in the Bible? This is certainly a valid question.

Realize that the reign of the Israelite king Jehu of Scripture is to be correctly dated 885-858 BCE. If the generally accepted date for Shalmaneser were considered to be correct (*viz.*, 859–824 BCE), then Shalmaneser’s 18th year would be 841 BCE. So, admittedly, the chronology of Shalmaneser does not line up with Jehu of Scripture simply because he was not even alive in 841 BCE. Obviously, the Jehu of the Assyrian records, with a shortfall of 17 years, must be a different Jehu. Once again, faced with this fact, modern scholars solve the problem by concocting a false narrative that throws out the chronology of the Bible, but keeps the sacrosanct Assyrian chronology in tact.

The Jehu of the Bible is specifically identified as “Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi” (2 Kgs 9:2) — obviously — *Hello!* — not the same as this person “Jehu, son of Omri.”

Furthermore, have scholars forgotten that the Jehu of the Bible was noted for overthrowing the Omride Dynasty and establishing his own line of kings. Indeed, the Assyrians went out of their way to distinguish this Jehu from the earlier Jehu by mentioning his father’s name so that there would be no confusion that they were referring to a different Jehu than the earlier Jehu.

Obviously, this second “Jehu” of the Assyrian records must have been appointed by the Assyrians to reorganize Palestine into an Assyrian province in the same vein as Nebuchadnezzar had done with the Southern Kingdom when he appointed Gedaliah to supervise Babylonian affairs in Judah after the Fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE (Jer 40:5). Gedaliah was not added to the Judean king lists either, nor should he have been. Likewise, the Jewish scribes would not have mentioned this second Jehu because he was not of the kingly line of Judah. He was merely an administrator who may have been even considered by the Hebrew scribes a traitor as well.

This is what we know. During the second and third years of the siege against Samaria, the campaign was conducted by the son of Tiglath-pileser III, *viz.*, Sargon II.

⁷⁵⁷ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, 1:240-41 §§658-9 (emphasis the author’s).

⁷⁵⁸ This exact same formula, *viz.*, “At that time Hadad-ezer of Aram (Syria), Irhuleni of Hamath, together with 12 kings of the seacoast ...” is curiously used for his 10th year (*ARAB*, §652), his 11th year, (*ARAB*, §654), and his 14th year (*ARAB*, §654).

⁷⁵⁹ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, 1:241 §§660-62.

⁷⁶⁰ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, 1:205 §573.

⁷⁶¹ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records*, 1:243 §672.

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...the king of Assyria who invaded the land and besieged Samaria was Sargon II. Sargon's first 3 regnal years were 721-719, which correspond to the siege during Hoshea's 7th-9th years. This recognition of Sargon II as the king of Assyria during the years of the siege identifies him as the unnamed king of Assyria in 2 Kgs 17:5-6 and distinguishes him from Shalmaneser of Assyria in 17:3-4.⁷⁶²

The 14th year of Shalmaneser III in actuality coincided with the year 722 BCE. This means that he had ascended to the throne in the royal city of Calah in the year of 736/5 BCE. But what it really means is that the so-called famous Battle of Qarqar (mentioned only in Assyrian records) supposedly occurred in Shalmaneser's sixth year, in reality actually occurred in the year of 730 BCE. And by the chronology that is established herein this exactly is the very ninth year of the interregnum after Hoshea slew Pekah. Think of that! What an absolutely amazing collaboration of historical facts once we get the chronology right. All the suspicious manipulation of names and numbers by modern historians should alarm new students of history to re-investigate this entire matter and overthrow the old false theories that modern scholars have substituted for the truth for so long.

Recall above that it was in the year of 738 BCE that Hoshea slew Pekah, but Hoshea was not appointed to the throne of Israel until nine years later, in the year of 729 BCE. Wait a minute, why? Because in the interim Tiglath-pileser III appointed a viceroy to take charge of Assyrian affairs in Israel. The Bible does not record the name of this interim regent. But now we see that the year just before Tiglath-pileser III reappoints Hoshea to the throne of Israel, the previous appointee rebelled against Shalmaneser III in the Battle of Qarqar. Shalmaneser identifies the name of this interim ruler as "Ahab the Israelite" (*A-ha-ab-bu mat Sir-'i-la-a-a*).⁷⁶³

Notice that in the sixth year of Shalmaneser III, in the Battle of Qarqar on the Orontes River in Syria (correctly dated 730/729 BCE), an "Ahab the Israelite" is in command of 2000 chariots and 10,000 soldiers. Shalmaneser claimed victory in the battle. But note here a very important point. This is the very same year that Tiglath-pileser III, by Biblical chronology, restored Hoshea to the throne. Can this just be coincidence or historical truth? How many coincidences does it take to finally admit that what we are dealing with is nothing short of an astounding confirmation of the chronology that is presented within these pages and cannot be overthrown by a modern false reconstruction of Assyrian chronology during all the chaos at this time.

Shalmaneser — Beyond the Fall of Samaria

According to the Biblical chronological record, it is the very next year that Hoshea was finally appointed to the throne of the Northern Kingdom by Tiglath-pileser III after the defeat of this "Ahab the Israelite." So, what we must understand is the fact that the Assyrian kings who conquered Israel or Judah were able to stabilize the government by appointing magistrates to conduct business affairs during these interregnums that are clearly delineated in the Biblical record.

And as far as what Josephus brought out, the annals of Shalmaneser III show that he did indeed accomplish what Josephus recorded. Shalmaneser III went on to conquer Syria, Phoenicia, and all the neighboring coastal nations, including Tyre.⁷⁶⁴

Let's recap this important section. As noted above, initially when Hoshea slew Pekah in 738 BCE, Tiglath-pileser (III) appointed his own regent who he believed would be a loyal subject to

⁷⁶² Tetley, *Reconstructed Chronology*, 159.

⁷⁶³ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 279.

⁷⁶⁴ Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 281.

Assyrian hegemony. That regent was indeed named “Ahab,” who ruled from 738 to 729 BCE. But in 729 BCE this Ahab II eventually rebelled against Assyrian rule which led to the Battle of Qarqar and his own demise.

When history is restored to its proper place, then the synchronisms are there and clearly apparent. At last, history is finally being restored to its proper place, thanks to a correct chronology that has eluded Biblical students and historians alike from time immemorial. When the facts are laid out side by side, the facts tell their own story and history finally begins to make sense.

And, as noted above when discussing the *Canon of Kings* of Ptolemy, he only went back as far as 747 BCE because that prior to that time the Assyrian scribes altered the records to make it look as if one dynasty ruled Assyria at a time. George Syncellus (d. after 810) even admitted that fact:

The records of Shalmaneser II (III) were probably destroyed by the usurper Sargon, and the records of the blank period of 51 years, B.C. 834-783, may have been similarly destroyed by Ashur-dan III when he came to the throne in B.C. 773. **Syncellus says the records for this period were tampered with, and he assigns this as the reason why Ptolemy’s canon went back no further than B.C. 747.**⁷⁶⁵

That certainly explains why this period of Assyrian history is so out of whack and should be questioned. This is definitely a very important consideration. Even ancient chronographers were aware of the fact that before the time of Tiglath-pileser III, the records were “tampered with.” Indeed, they were! Yet scholars are certain that these “tampered records” are what should overthrow the validity of Biblical chronology. Really?

Once again, it must be stated that history must make sense. The history presented to us in modern “scholarly” history books not only destroys the Biblical narrative but most seriously, makes zero historical sense! It is a hodge-podge of pure gobbledygook. And yet modern scholars have presented this erroneous narrative as genuine ancient history.

We must come to realize that as long as scholars are totally unwilling to admit that there were parallel dynasties ruling from different cities in Assyria, as well as in Egypt, they will never be able to come to a coherent history of Assyria, Egypt, nor the Bible. But the reality is that they will, in the end, never be able to withstand the abundance of evidence that corrects the historical record. In the meantime, we will continue to expose this false history as we encounter it.

As to whether Tiglath-pileser III and Shalmaneser III were contemporaries, notice some other curious facts. The palace that Shalmaneser III had built images on its walls of Tiglath-pileser III, supposedly a later king who wasn’t even born yet by conventional chronology. Nevertheless, what do we see?

According to various passages in his annals, Shalmaneser III took Til Barsip from its king, built a palace for his royal residence, and called the city by his own name, Kar-Shalmaneser. The palace continued in use until the time of Ashurbanipal and within this time, largely in the eighth century, was decorated with brightly colored wall paintings, spread over more than 120 meters of walls. This is the most extensive display of such Assyrian art ever found. The largest single composition shows Tiglath-pileser III, with his officials, giving audience to a group of foreigners.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶⁵ Martin Anstey, *Romance*, 1:220, citing George Syncellus, *Historia Chronographia* (emphasis the author’s).

⁷⁶⁶ Finegan, *Archaeology*, 109.

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So, the serious question here is, how is it possible that the palace of Shalmaneser III, supposedly reigned from 858-824 BCE, has images of Tiglath-pileser III, conventionally dated as reigning 745-727 BCE, on the panels of his palace, a person who wasn't even born when purportedly Shalmaneser III was alive?

Scholars, of course, refusing to believe their very own eyes, tell us that these images must have been added after the time that Shalmaneser III reigned. What else could they say in order to justify their rigid belief in the Assyrian king lists? Nonetheless, it appears here that scholars once again have a ready excuse for their false reconstruction of history.

Again, we read:

The main capital of **Tiglath-pileser III** was at **Kalah** (Nimrud), and important sculptures of his have been recovered there.... On an ivory inlay piece for furniture, an Aramaic inscription states that this was made for Hazael; since **Shalmaneser III** fought against Hazael of Damascus, the inlaid furniture could have been part of the booty, *later placed* in the palace of Tiglath-pileser III at Haddattu.⁷⁶⁷

Continuing, in the sixth year of King Hezekiah (720 BCE), Samaria fell (2 Kgs 18:9-10). At that time Shalmaneser III appointed a "Jehu, son of Omri" to conduct the final affairs of Israel. We do not know how long Jehu II continued, but probably for no longer than five or six years thereafter. With this backdrop, we are now ready to produce a chronology of the Kings of Israel that represents a chronology that is completely in accordance with the contemporary Kings of Judah.

The Chronology of the Kings of Israel Restored

Table 26:

| Kings of Israel | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| No. | Kings of Israel | Years Ruled | Dates BCE | References | Contemporary Kings of Judah |
| 1 | Jeroboam I ^a | 22 | 976-955 | 1 Kgs 14:20-21 | Rehoboam |
| 2 | Nadab | 2 | 955-954 | 1 Kgs 15:10, 25-26 | 2 nd of Asa |
| 3 | Baasha ^b | 24 | 954-931 | 1 Kgs 15:28, 33 | 3 rd of Asa |
| 4 | Elah | 2 | 931-930 | 1 Kgs 16:8 | 26 th of Asa |
| 5 | Zimri | 7 days | 930-930 | 1 Kgs 16:10-16 | 27 th of Asa |
| 6 | Tibni and Omri | 6 | 930-925 | 1 Kgs 16:21-23 | 27 th of Asa |

⁷⁶⁷ Finegan, *Archaeology*, 112 (emphasis the author's). Notice the words "could have been placed" They are revealing and worthy of further scrutiny in the discussion. When scholars use phrases like this and then do not give the reader other possibilities, should one not be suspicious of a cover-up? There is another possibility that no modern scholar would ever entertain, however. It also "could have been" that both Tiglath-pileser III and Shalmaneser III were contemporaries and that this is further evidence of such a fact. Therefore, a better explanation just might be that the furniture of Hazael (Hazeal II!) was part of the booty that both Shalmaneser III and Tiglath-pileser III shared in. More evidence that Tiglath-pileser III and Shalmaneser III were contemporaries will be further addressed in volume two of this series.

Table 26:

| Kings of Israel | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------|-----------|-------------------|---|
| No. | Kings of Israel | Years Ruled | Dates BCE | References | Contemporary Kings of Judah |
| 7 | Omri | 6 | 925-919 | 1 Kgs 16:23 | 31 st of Asa |
| 8 | Ahab ^c | 22 | 919-898 | 1 Kgs 16:29 | 38 th of Asa |
| 9 | Ahaziah | 2 | 898-897 | 1 Kgs 22:51-52 | 17 th of Jehoshaphat |
| 10 | Joram | 12 | 897-885 | 2 Kgs 1:17; 3:1 | 18 th of Jehoshaphat |
| 11 | Jehu I ^d | 28 | 885-858 | 2 Kgs 10:36 | Accession of Ahab ^c |
| 12 | Jehoahaz | 27 | 858-841 | 2 Kgs 13:1 | 21 st of Joash ^e |
| 13 | Jehoash | 5 | 841-836 | 2 Kgs 13:10 | 37 th of Joash ^f |
| 13 & 14 | Jehoash & Jeroboam II | 12 | 836-825 | | |
| 14 | Jeroboam II | 29 | 825-783 | 2 Kgs 14:23 | 14 th of Amaziah ^g |
| 15 | Interregnum ^h (Ben Hadad) | 12 | 783-771 | 2 Kgs 14:23; 15:8 | (41 st of Jeroboam II) |
| 16 | Zachariah | 6 mo. | 771 | 2 Kgs 15:8 | 38 th of Azariah |
| 17 | Shallum | 1 mo. | 770 | 2 Kgs 15:13 | 39 th of Azariah |
| 18 | Mehahem | 10 | 770-760 | 2 Kgs 15:17 | 39 th of Azariah |
| 19 | Pekahiah | 2 | 760-758 | 2 Kgs 15:23 | 50 th of Azariah |
| 20 | Pekah | 20 | 758-738 | 2 Kgs 15:27 | 52 nd of Azariah |
| 21 | Interregnum (Ahab II) ⁱ | 9 | 738-729 | 2 Kgs 15:30-32 | 20 th of Jotham; 4 th of Ahaz |
| 22 | Hoshea | 9 | 729-720 | 2 Kgs 17:1 | 12 th of Ahaz |
| 23 | Jehu II (Governor)) | 6? | 720-714? | | 6 th of Hezekiah |

a. The accession of Rehoboam of Judah was in 977 BCE and was prior to that of Jeroboam I of Israel, who ascended in the year of 976 BCE. Thus, the first year of Jeroboam straddled that of Rehoboam's accession year, *viz.*, 977/76 BCE.

b. 2 Chr 16:1 states that Baasha built the city of Ramah in the 36th year of Asa. Of course, this would be impossible, as many scholars have noted. The reason why this would be impossible is the fact that the 36th year of Asa would not occur until 921/920 BCE, which would equate to the 11th year of Omri, 10 years after Baasha died. What is meant here is that Baasha built the city in the 36th year of the Kingdom of Israel, which would be in 941 BCE, but the 16th year of Asa.

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c. The story of Elijah begins around the fourth year of Ahab, *viz.*, 916 BCE (1 Kgs 17-19). Thus, the three-year famine must be dated from 916-914 BCE.

d. Jehu, 28 years (2 Kgs 10:36), slays Ahaziah and Joram at the same time. Jehoram of Judah became king in the fifth year of Joram of Israel for 8 years (2 Kgs 8:16-17). In the final two years of Jehoram's life, he was stricken with a terminal bowel disease (2 Chr 21:18-19). His health deteriorating, Jehoram made Ahaziah — his sole surviving heir — co-regent in the eleventh year of Joram (2 Kgs 9:29); but it was technically the twelfth year of Joram that Jehu was anointed king (2 Kgs 9:6), as well as Ahaziah of Judah (2 Kgs 8:25).

e. It is at this point that the numbers of the Israelite Kings in the MT for some reason are impossible to harmonize with the MT numbers for the Kings of Judah. However, divine providence comes to the rescue with a correct restoration of the true numbers through Josephus, resolving this seemingly Biblical anomaly. First of all, Josephus says that Jehu only reigned 27 years (*Ant.* 9.8.1 [§160], Whiston, 256) — not 28 years (2 Kgs 10:36). Secondly, according to Josephus, Jehoahaz began to reign in the 21st year of Joash (*Ant.* 9.8.5 [§173], Whiston, 257) — not the 23rd of Joash. And when we apply these corrections we that this harmonizes perfectly with the 27th year of Jehu. Thus, the testimony of Josephus, having cleared up the discrepancy, is herein accepted and the year was 858 BCE is established as to the true date when Jehoahaz must have began his reign.

f. Here, the Bible, as well as Josephus, reunite in chronological harmony (Josephus, *Ant.* 9.8.6 [§177], Whiston, 257).

g. Jeroboam II became king in the 15th year of King Amaziah of Judah (2 Kgs 14:23). Amaziah lived another 15 years after the death of Jehoash (2 Kgs 14:17). Josephus stated Azariah ascended the throne of Judah in the 14th year of Jeroboam (*Ant.* 9:10:3 [§§215-16], Whiston, 260). This perfectly harmonizes with the chronology established herein thus far. However, the Bible states that Amaziah came to the throne in the 27th year of Jeroboam (2 Kgs 15:1-2). This is an obvious confusion with the 27th year of Amaziah that Jeroboam was forced to flee Israel in his 41st year.

h. Jeroboam ruled for forty-one years (2 Kgs 14:23) But he did not die in his 41st year. Jeroboam fled Israel during the Great Earthquake and the invasion of the Arameans. Then Ben-Hadad of Aram moved in and Israel was without a king for twelve years. At the end of the twelve years, Jeroboam returned with an army to recapture Israel from the Syrians (2 Kgs 14:23-29). Jeroboam returned to restore Israel twelve years later and then died when his son assumed the throne “in the thirty and eighth year of King Azariah of Judah” (2 Kgs 15:8).

i. During this apparent nine-year interregnum in the MT chronology, Tiglath-pileser III had installed a puppet king “Ahab of Israel.” The Biblical scribes did not record him since they did not recognize him as a legitimate king during this time, as they did not recognize Ben Hadad as being the ruler of Israel during the 12-year interregnum from 783-771 BCE.

CHAPTER 15

ANCIENT ARAM-DAMASCUS

*A*NCIENT ARAM-DAMASCUS PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE IN THE HISTORY OF King David, Solomon, and down through the time of ancient kings of Israel/Judah during the days of the Divided Kingdom, especially during the reigns of Athalia (885-879 BCE) and Joash (879-839 BCE) of the House of Judah, and of Jehu I (885-858 BCE) and Jehoahaz (858-841 BCE) of the House of Israel. It was during these reigns that the powerful and the historically noted Aramean King Hazael ruled. That time period gives us a span of time of about 45 years, by our chronology, *ca.* 885-840 BCE, in which Hazael must have been on the throne.⁷⁶⁸

Unfortunately, we today are deprived of any surviving king list of those ancient Syrian rulers.⁷⁶⁹ This is a real problem for establishing a correct chronology of the time of the Divided Kingdom. Had such a king list survived, it would have totally demolished the modern-day reconstruction of Egyptian history, which these scholars have used to drive all other Near Eastern chronologies. Without such a king list scholars of today could now be relaxed and be confident that their reconstruction of the history of the ancient Syrians now poses no threat to their false chronology of ancient Egypt.

Amazingly, this Hazael is mentioned in the famous Tell-el-Amarna letters. But modern scholarship will turn around and tell you that this is entirely impossible. Why? Because they place these letters during the reigns of Amenhotep III (falsely dated *ca.* 1390–53 BCE) and Akhenaten

⁷⁶⁸ Modern scholars place the reign of Hazael forty or so years later, *ca.* 842-805 BCE. Henry Fynes Clinton, whose chronology was uninfluenced by modern Egyptologists, follows exactly the year proposed herein and has more correctly dated Hazael as reigning from 886-840 BCE (*Epitome*, 131).

⁷⁶⁹ Except for Biblical sources and excerpts in Josephus and other ancient writers, such a king list would have certainly been handed down to us recorded in the 144 lost volumes the *Universal History* by Nicholas of Damascus (b. *ca.* 64 BCE-?). Such a loss should be considered a tragedy in scholarly sources, but the reality is that without such a list, modern scholars can breathe a sigh of relief that their bogus Egyptian chronology cannot be challenged by ancient Syrian Chronology.

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(would be *ca.* 1353-1336 BCE) some 500 years before the time of Hazael. But wait a minute. That is just the very point that we are making here. Had modern-day scholars dated the 18th Dynasty of Egypt correctly, they would have immediately identified the “Aziru” mentioned in these letters with the “Hazael” of the Bible.⁷⁷⁰

The “Aziru” of these letters was a king of a people who were called the “Amarru” (Aram) with his capital in “Dumasqa” (Damascus). And if those identifications are not enough, hang onto your seats, because also mentioned is the land of “Sumur” (Samaria) and a person called “Ianhama” — a deputy of Amenhotep III⁷⁷¹ in Syria.⁷⁷² This person answers to the “Naaman” of 2 Kings 5.

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man in high favor with his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy (2 Kgs 5:1).

The Truth about the Tell el-Amarna Letters

Many scholars of today foolishly date the Tell el-Amarna Letters to the time of Joshua. Why? Well, first of all, they are forced to do so because they have slavishly tied these letters to the false interpretation of modern-day Egyptian chronology. And secondly, since these letters seem to reveal that many of the coastal areas of Syria and Palestine were warring against each other at the time, then shouldn't that supposedly suggest that it must be the time period that Joshua who lead the “Habiru/Hapiru” mentioned in these texts (falsely identified as “Hebrews”) when he invaded Canaan?⁷⁷³

Such an interpretation of history is so horribly wrong that it only reveals the fact that modern scholarship has gone completely off its rocker. They are either playing a giant joke on us all and laughing behind our backs, or they must be the stupidest people on the planet! This is especially true when they try to fit the square peg of the time of Ramesses II into the round hole of the time of the Exodus. That would make the time of Joshua precede that of the time of Moses. Such foolish nonsense stands self-condemned! Such a topsy-turvy reconstruction of history should have alerted modern scholarship that something was seriously wrong with their reconstruction of Egyptian chronology — but alas — it did nothing of the kind. Nevertheless, the honest student of history must stay focused and not be detracted by such preposterous upside down chronology of the absurd.

First of all, there is not one person named in the *Book of Joshua* that can be reasonably identified in any of the Tell el-Amarna letters:

When the Israelites entered Canaan, Adonizedek was king of Jerusalem, Hoham king of Hebron, Piram king of Jarmuth, Japhia king of Lachish, and Debir king of Eglon (Joshua 10:3). Among the letters there are a number written by kings of some of these places but not by these kings. Much more important is the fact that

⁷⁷⁰ Dr. Velikovsky noted: “The scriptural version of the Hazael, *l* and *r* being interchangeable characters, differs from the name if the tablets (Aziru or Azaru) in the aspirate sound *h*. ... Josephus Flavius called Hazael by the name Azaelos,” *Ages*, 237.

⁷⁷¹ Amenhotep's reign will be restored in volume 2 of this series to the years of 915-877 BCE. This overlaps beautifully with the reigns of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram of Judah and Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram, and Jehu I of Israel, so everything correctly aligns itself chronologically with the Bible and history.

⁷⁷² Samuel A. B. Mercer and Frank H. Hallock noted: “Ianhamu was a powerful Egyptian agent in Syria, where he was respected as a good and wise man, and where he proved himself to be the most faithful of the pharaoh's servants,” *Tell el-Amarna Tablets* (Toronto: Macmillan Co., 1939), 297.

⁷⁷³ So, for example, the failed attempt of the website: “The 382 Amarna Tablets of the Hebrew Conquest ‘They are digging up Bible stories’ (again), 1404 - 1340 BC,” online at <http://www.bible.ca/archeology/bible-archeology-maps-conquest-amarna-tablets-letters-akhenaten-habiru-abiru-hebrews-1404-1340bc.htm> (accessed Mar. 9, 2022).

there is little similarity in the events described in both sources. The episode of the siege of Jericho, the most remarkable occurrence in the first period of the conquest is missing in the letters, and Jericho is not mentioned at all. This silence is strange, if the Habiru were the Hebrews under Joshua. No contemporaneous event can be traced in the letters.⁷⁷⁴

If Egypt, after the Exodus, now suddenly had bounced back and had some kind of new hold on Canaan, indeed, all of the eastern Mediterranean, as the Tell el-Amarna letters document, such a scenario certainly doesn't play out in the *Book of Joshua*. The *Book of Joshua* and the Tell el-Amarna letters are at odds at every fundamental point. Indeed, Barry J. Beitzel further points out this fact:

Historical discrepancies between the circumstances of the Hapiru and the Hebrews exist at several levels. First, the vast preponderance of Amarna texts that mention the Hapiru derive from exactly those cities and regions which, according to the Conquest narratives, Israel never attempted to capture. ... Lachish and Gezer, mentioned in the Conquest narrative precisely in conjunction with the liberation of Gibeon, are attested in Amarna documents as allies, not enemies, of the Hapiru.⁷⁷⁵

Dr. Beitzel is indeed correct. He goes on to say that Egypt is not even mentioned in the Joshua-Judges narrative. The Hapiru are definitely not the "Hebrews." But the Hapiru are characterized as marauding plunderers, not a large group of tribes, united to establish a new homeland, and on and on ...

"Aziru" Is the Key to Unlocking the Mystery of the Hapiru

It is time to go back and look at some very important facts. Notice first that when King Jehoshaphat of Judah died, his wicked son Jehoram succeeded him. The first thing that Jehoram did, in order to secure his rule, was to murder all of his rival siblings (2 Chron 21:1-7). That turned out to be Jehoram's fatal mistake, even though Scripture states:

Yet the LORD would not destroy the house of David because of the covenant that he had made with David, and since he had promised to give a lamp to him and to his descendants forever (2 Chr 21:7).

Nevertheless, thereafter all the nations surrounding Jehoram began to revolt against him. Immediately after Jehoram's purge, we read that:

In his [Jehoram's] days Edom revolted against the rule of Judah and set up a king of their own. ... At that time Libneh also revolted against his rule, because he had forsaken the LORD, the God of his ancestors (2 Chr 21:8-10).

Next, we read that Jehoram was being attacked on all sides:

The LORD aroused against Jehoram the anger of the Philistines and of the Arabs who are near the Ethiopians. They came up against Judah, invaded it, and carried away all the possessions they found that belonged to the king's house, along with his sons and his wives, so that no son was left to him except Jehoahaz, his youngest son (2 Chr 21:16).

And "after all this," Jehoram was then finally afflicted with such a devastating disease that, after a two-year period of his miserable agony, finally cost him his life:

⁷⁷⁴ Velikovsky, *Ages*, 228.

⁷⁷⁵ Barry J. Beitzel, "Habiru," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 2:589.

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After all this the LORD struck him in his bowels with an incurable disease. In course of time, at the end of two years, his bowels came out because of the disease, and he died in great agony (2 Chr 21:18-19).

The year of this occurrence by our chronology was 886 BCE. With Jehoram now dead, he was next succeeded by his son, Ahaziah, who also was said to have walked in the ways of Ahab (2 Chr 8:26). The warring and chaos continued in Judah, Israel, and Aram. This is definitely directly reflected in the Tell el-Amarna letters — certainly not in some absurd theory that this situation in any way reflected the conquest of the Israelites in the time of Joshua!

The Death of Ben-Hadad I — As Told in the Amarna Letters and the Bible

From the Biblical record, we can see that after many years of warring with Judah and Israel, the king of Aram, Ben-Hadad I, was also afflicted with some kind of terminal illness. First of all, the Biblical record provides us with the following pertinent information concerning what was going on at that time:

Elisha went to Damascus while King Ben-hadad of Aram was ill. When it was told him, “The man of God has come here,” the king said to Hazael, ... go to meet the man of God. Inquire of the LORD through him, whether I shall recover through this illness.” So Hazael went to meet him ... When he entered and stood before him, he said, “Your son King Ben-hadad of Aram, sent me to you, saying ‘Shall I recover from this illness?’” Elisha said to him, “Go, say to him, ‘You shall certainly recover’; but the Lord has shown me that he shall certainly die.” He fixed his gaze and stared at him, until he was ashamed. Then the man of God wept. Hazael asked, “Why does my lord weep?” He answered, “Because I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel; you will set their fortresses on fire, you will kill their young men with the sword, dash in pieces their little ones, and rip up their pregnant women.” Hazael said, “What is your servant, who is a mere dog, that he should do this great thing?” (2 Kgs 8:7-13).

Notice the expression: “is your servant ...a mere dog.” This was an expression that was frequently used in Tell el-Amarna letters. Letter 125 states:

Aziru [Hazael] has again oppressed me ... My cities belong to Aziru, and he seeks after me. ... What are the dogs, the sons of Abdi-Ashirta [Ben-Hadad I], that they act according to their heart’s wish, and cause the cities of the king to go up in smoke?⁷⁷⁶

This is the very exact same scenario that Elisha had predicted — now apparently being testified as being fulfilled. Indeed, short of a direct quote from the Tell el-Amarna letters themselves, this most definitely delineates a clear parallel to these historical events.

Josephus also related this same renowned story of ancient times. But then he added some further commentary. Although Ben-Hadad and Hazael were remembered for their cruelty in the Scriptures, they nevertheless were remembered in Syrian history as national heroes. Indeed, some nine centuries later Josephus (no doubt quoting Nicholas of Damascus) stated:

He [Hazael] was an active man, and had the good will of the Syrians, and of the people of Damascus, **to a great degree**; by whom both Benhadad [*i.e.*, Adados] and Hazael [*i.e.*, Azaelos], who ruled after him, are honored to this day as gods, by reason of their benefactions, and their building them temples by which they adorned the city of the Damascens.⁷⁷⁷

⁷⁷⁶ Quoted from Velikovsky, *Ages*, 295.

Dr. Hoeh further noted that

Hazael posed as Pharaoh's obedient ally — as did most of the quarreling princes of the eastern Mediterranean coast. But he refused to render any act of submission. The king of Egypt had received many reports that Aram was not remaining loyal. In letter 162, addressed to Aziru or Hazael, the king of Egypt warns: "If thou for any object desirest to do evil, or if thou layest up evil words of hatred in thy heart, then wilt thou die by the axe of the king together with thy whole family. Render submission then to the king, thy lord, (and) thou shalt live. Thou knowest, indeed, that the king does not desire to go heavily against the whole land of Kinahhi" — Canaan.⁷⁷⁸ The letter was filled with empty words. Egypt had too many troubles of her own to afford costly expeditions to Syria.⁷⁷⁹

The Mystery of the "Habiru" Revealed

In the Tell el-Amarna letters, there appears a certain Abdi-Hepa of "Urusalim" who writes to "Pharaoh" about a people he described as the "Habiru" (or "Khapiru"). It was thought by earlier scholars that the word "Habiru" might be identified with the "Hebrews." But the word in the Hebrew language for "Hebrew" is "Ivri" — not even a close second!

Linguistically, the Akkadian word "Hapiru" has been identified with the Sumerian logographic form SA.GAZ which in turn hails back to the Akkadian "saggasu" meaning "murderer, aggressor, marauder."⁷⁸⁰

The Akkadian lexical equivalent to SA.GAZ is *habatu*, "robber, brigand" or "wanderer, migrant," a word used occasionally as an Akkadian synonym for *hapiru*.⁷⁸¹

If anything, the Hebrew root would be חָבֵר, "khaber," meaning someone who was a member of a company or band of people.⁷⁸² In Isaiah 1:23 it is used as a "companions of thieves." In Proverbs 28:24 it is used as a "companion of a destroyer." So, used in a negative sense, it carries all the weight of "cut-throats," "gangs," or "bandits."

Today most orientalists consider the expression *habiru/hapiru* encompassed fugitives who had left their own states either to live as refugees in other parts of the Near East or outlaws who subsisted as brigands out of reach of the authorities of those states.⁷⁸³

So, the so-called "*habiru*" = "Hebrew" correlation was an unfortunate overreach in wishful thinking by some "Biblical" enthusiasts who thought that they were proving the Exodus narrative as true in identifying the "Habiru" with the ancient Israelites. Specialists in Akkadian linguistics have proven that the word "Habiru" has absolutely no connection with the Hebrew word "Ivri".

⁷⁷⁷ Josephus, *Ant.*, 9.4.6 [§93] (Whiston, 251). An amazing statement that Josephus adds is that the Syrian people of his day did not know "that these kings are much later than they imagine." What? Even so, Josephus believed that they lived some eleven hundred years previous to his time, when in reality, it was nine hundred years before his time. Nevertheless, it certainly wasn't the fifteen hundred years that modern scholars place him. The difference is some 600 years, which is what we are demonstrating.

⁷⁷⁸ Mercer and Hallock, *Tell El-Amarna Tablets*, 2:523.

⁷⁷⁹ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:157-58, quoting S. A. Mercer.

⁷⁸⁰ Niels Peter Lemche, "Habiru/Hapiru" in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 3:6-7.

⁷⁸¹ Beitzel, "Habiru," *ISBE*, 2:586.

⁷⁸² Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1907), 288.

⁷⁸³ Lemche, "Habiru," 3:7.

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The lexemes ‘apiru (Hapiru) and ‘ibri (Hebrew) are unrelated in derivation, morphology, and semantics.⁷⁸⁴

The term *outlaw* conveniently catches the double nuance of the habiru as those who stand recognizably outside the prevailing order, whether as fugitives or refugees in flight or expelled from the dominate order, or as soldiers of fortune, brigands, or rebels who prey upon or threaten the dominant order.⁷⁸⁵

... study of cuneiform literature has shown that the *Hapiru* were known for too long a time and were active over too wide an area for us to equate them with the biblical Hebrews. It is also clear that *Hapiru* is not an ethnic term — the people so designated come from many different ethnic groups. This point is illustrated in the Amarna Letters by the fact that various groups or individuals, even city-state rulers, might *become Hapiru*. The term seems to have signified people from varying ethnic backgrounds who shared an inferior social status. It was a term of contempt for dissident individuals or groups who separated themselves from their society and, depending upon circumstances, became renegades, mercenaries, bandits, refugees, hired laborers, or settled retainers. ... Furthermore, the people and events described in the Amarna Letters are very different from those found in the biblical conquest stories. The proposed identification of the Amarna Letters’ *Hapiru* with the conquering Israelites must be abandoned.⁷⁸⁶

Nowadays, there is hardly any serious linguistic scholar who identifies the word “Habiru” with the Hebrews of Joshua’s day. Niels Peter Lemche’s comment on this is worthy of consideration:

The fact that these *habiru/hapiru* ... were only mentioned by the king of Jerusalem was, however, considered a serious obstacle to this identification, because — according to the OT — Jerusalem was not attacked by the Israelites until the early days of King David, ca. 1000 B.C.⁷⁸⁷

The point here is that the “Hapiru” were not invading conquering Israelites of Joshua’s day. They were part of the fringes of Palestinian society of a much later time. The Habiru were bands of cut-throat thieves who ravaged and overran Syria/Palestine in the days of Jehoram and Jehoahaz.

The khabiru or habiru were the Aramean, Philistine, Moabite, Arabian bands of plunderers who were overrunning Phoenicia, Syria and Palestine in the days of Jehoram and Jehoahaz.⁷⁸⁸

Donald B. Redford’s comments further reinforce the true status of the Hapiru:

A separate group called the ‘*Apiru* lay slightly beyond the fringe of “polite” Canaanite society of the Late Bronze Age. These were a collection of antisocial renegades, castoffs from society, who maintained a semi-independent community in the rural districts of the Canaanite states. Though often in the service of the states, the ‘*Apiru* generally guarded their independence and freedom of movement. ... the ‘*Apiru*, as their name suggests (“dust makers,” i.e. people who vacate the premises with speed) display a gypsy like quality, and proved difficult for the state authorities to bring under effective control. Their heterogeneous nature is vividly illustrated by census lists from Alalakh, wherein one ‘*Apiru* band includes an armed thief, two charioteers, two beggars, and even a priest of Istar.⁷⁸⁹

⁷⁸⁴ Beitzel, “Habiru,” *ISBE*, 2:589.

⁷⁸⁵ Norman K. Gottwald, “Habiru, Hapiru,” *The Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 2:709.

⁷⁸⁶ Stiebing, *Ancient Near Eastern History*, 187.

⁷⁸⁷ Lemche, “Habiru/Hapiru,” 3:6. Lemche further noted “... that it was necessary to disassociate the problem of the *habiru* from the early history of the Israelites [when it] first became apparent in Egyptian sources and later in Ugaritic documents, which made it clear that the second consonant should most properly be read *p* instead of *b*, (*op. cit.*).

⁷⁸⁸ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:159.

⁷⁸⁹ Redford, *Ancient Times*, 195.

Does this sound like the Hebrew tribes? If modern Egyptologists are throwing in the towel on this theory, then we can be satisfied that it is time to dismiss the idea that the Habiru were “Hebrews” once and for all. The Habiru of the Amarna Letters were not the Hebrews and they certainly had nothing to do with the invading Israelites in Joshua’s day. This failed theory has now run its course and is discredited among even secular scholars.

Who Was “Abdi-Hepa?”

Some who support the idea that the Hapiru were the Israelites under Joshua object to the idea that the king of Judah (Jerusalem) was Jehoram because the king of Jerusalem during the Amarna period was a certain “Abdi-Hepa.” But wait a minute — isn’t there a colossal assumption here? It is assumed that the Abdi-Hepa was a king of Jerusalem. Where did that idea come from? Where is the evidence for such an assumption? Let us look at the facts.

We must understand that anyone who has seriously read the Tell el-Amarna letters (including scholars?) would have to agree that this Abdi-Hepa mentioned therein was no king or dignitary of any sort. Once again we are trying to be bamboozled with faulty assertions. It is time that this matter be straightened out once and for all.

Much also has been written of the person of Abdi-hibba. Scholars assume he was the king of *Urusalim*. That the name *Urusalim* is the cuneiform transcription of the name Jerusalem is plausible. But Abdi-hibba was no king of Jerusalem. In addressing the Egyptian court he wrote: “Verily, I am not a regent; I am an officer of the king, my lord. Behold I am a shepherd of the king, and I am one who bears the tribute of the king. Neither my father nor my mother, but the mighty hand of the king has set me in the house of my father” (Letter 288). The king is Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Again in Letter 287 he repeats: “Verily, this land of the city of Urusalim, neither my father nor my mother has given it to me.” And in Letter 285: “Behold, I am not a regent, I am an officer of the king, my lord.” Abdi-hibba was a Palestinian adventurer who had himself appointed an officer of Pharaoh to administer Egyptian affairs over a portion of the land that belonged to the city of *Urusalim*. “Take silver and follow me,” he was accused of saying (Letter 280).⁷⁹⁰

It is time to put aside the notion that this person “Abdi-Hepa” was ever a king of Jerusalem (and for that matter, that he ever lived in the time of Joshua). Abdi-Hepa was a sort of commander of the marauding bands of cutthroat soldiers-of-fortunes known as the “Hapiru” who lived in the time of Hazael I of Aram and Jehoram of Judah. And, since he reported back to pharaoh Amenhotep III of Egypt, Egyptian chronology must be adjusted accordingly — not the other way around!⁷⁹¹

Let us now consider the visionary prophecies of Isaiah, who lived a little after this very time period, who could see what was going on at this time. He composed the following tirade:

Oh, rebellious children, says the LORD, who carry out a plan, but not mine; who make an alliance, but against my will, adding sin to sin;

who set out to go down to Egypt without asking for my counsel, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh, and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt;

Therefore the protection of Pharaoh shall become your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt your humiliation.

⁷⁹⁰ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:159-60.

⁷⁹¹ The 18th Dynasty will be restored to its rightful place in history in volume 2 of this series. See appendix 1.

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For though his officials are at Zoan and his envoys reach Hanes, everyone comes to shame through a people that cannot profit them, that brings neither help nor profit, but shame and disgrace (Isa 30:1-5).

From this, we gather that the nations along the Mediterranean coast often sought Egyptian “foreign aid,” so to speak, to help with their feuds, and that is reflected in what Isaiah wrote. These are the conditions that fit the time of the Amarna Letters, and no other period before!

It is time that scholars write real history and not the clap-trap nonsense that only seeks to tear down the Biblical record, because it is Biblical history that drives true history of the ancient world, and not modern theories that distort history to the point that makes ancient history total gibberish that makes not one bit of sense.

It is now time to put in chart form a reconstruction of ancient Syrian history that at least attempts to align itself with the chronology of Scripture.

The Kings of Aram-Damascus Restored

Table 27:

| King | Kinship | Years BCE | Known Events | Kings of Judah | Kings of Israel | Biblical References | Other Sources |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Rehob | King of Zobah | <i>ca.</i> 1050-1020 | | King David | | 2 Sam 10:16 | |
| Hadadezer | Son of Rehob | <i>ca.</i> 1020 -1000 | Rehob, King of Zobah and his Aramean supporter, Hadadezer I of Damascus, were defeated by King David. Damascus then was annexed to Israelite territory | David and Solomon (1057 -977) | | 2 Sam 8:3-12; 2 Sam 10:16; 1 Chr 18:3, 5; 1 Chr 19:16 | |
| Rezon | Son of Eliadah | <i>ca.</i> 1000 -970 | Seized Damascus from Solomon’s control | Solomon and Rehoboam | Solomon and Jeroboam I | 1 Kgs 11:23-25 ^a | Melqart Stele ^b |
| Hezion ^c | Son of Rezon | <i>ca.</i> 970-960 | | Rehoboam | Jeroboam I and Nadab | 1 Kgs 15:18 | Melqart Stele |

Table 27:

| King | Kinship | Years BCE | Known Events | Kings of Judah | Kings of Israel | Biblical References | Other Sources |
|---------------|--|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|
| Tab-Rimmon | Son of Hezion | <i>ca.</i> 960-950 | Treaty with Abijam of Judah | | | 1 Kgs 15:18-19; 2 Chr 16:3 | |
| Ben-Hadad I | Son of Tab-Rimmon | <i>ca.</i> 950-920 | Asa bribes Ben Hadad to attack Israel. Took towns from Omri | Asa (957-916) | Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Tibni, Omri | 1 Kgs 20:34 | |
| Ben-Hadad II | Son of Ben-Hadad I | <i>ca.</i> 920-890 | Alliance against Baasha of Israel with Asa of Judah in the 36 th year of the Kingdom of Judah (941) ^d | Asa (957-916); Jehoshaphat (916-984) | Ahab, Ahaziah | 1 Kgs 15:16-22; 2 Chr 16:1-16 | |
| Hazael | Son of Ben-Hadad I. ^e He is the Aziru of the Tell el-Amarna Letters | <i>ca.</i> 890-840 | Elisha anoints Hazael. Elisha's aide anoints Jehu I Hazael murders his father Ben-Hadad II | Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athalia, Joash | Ahab; Ahaziah; Jehoram; Jehu I, Jehoahaz | 1 Kgs 19:13-18 | Zakir Stele |
| Ben-Hadad III | Son of Hazael | <i>ca.</i> 840 - 790 | Battle at Ramoth-Gilead wounding Joram of Israel | | | 2 Kgs 13:24-25 | Melqart Stele; Zakir Stele ^f |

Ancient Aram-Damascus

Table 27:

| King | Kinship | Years BCE | Known Events | Kings of Judah | Kings of Israel | Biblical References | Other Sources |
|--------------|---------|-----------------------|---|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Rezin | Usurper | | Came against Ahaz; Rendered tribute to Tiglath-pileser III in 738 | Ahaz | Pekah | 2 Kgs 16:5-9 | |
| (Hada-dezer) | | 732 ^g -720 | Fought against Shalmaneser III | | | | |
| Hazael II | | 720 - 700 | | | | | |

a. The statement that Rezon was “an adversary all the days of Solomon” seems to suggest that Rezon’s rebellion occurred in the early years of Solomon’s reign.

b. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 655.

c. There is no evidence that this “Hezion” was a real king of Damascus, but he does fill in the chronological gap. And it is for this reason that some scholars assume that his name was just another name for Rezon. However, we duly note that some other scholars dispute that saying: “Scholars have sometimes identified Hezion with Rezon, who became king of Damascus during the reign of Solomon (1 Kgs 11:23-24), but there is no convincing evidence for this nor does it solve any pressing chronological or historical problem” (Richard D. Nelson, “Hezion” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 3:193).

d. Henry Fynes Clinton long ago noted that: “Asa’s league with Ben-Hadad, son of Tahrimon son of Hezion king of Syria in the 36th year of the reign of Asa, when he was threatened with war by Baasha. As the 36th of Asa Baasha was dead, we must either correct the numbers “26th” and place these transactions in the year of the death of Baasha, or we must understand them (with most commentators) to mean the 36th year of the Kingdom of Judah, which would place the league with Ben-Hadad in the 16th year of Asa” (*Epitome*), 129. See also Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 57, who came to the same conclusion (but never gave credit to Clinton for that previous deduction).

e. Most modern scholars call Hazael a “usurper” to the throne of Aram, but Nicholas of Damascus, quoted by Flavius Josephus, stated: “When Hadad was dead, his posterity reigned for ten generations, each of his successors receiving from his father that his dominion, and this his name; as did the Ptolemies in Egypt (Josephus, *Ant.*, 7.5.2 [§102], Whiston, 188). This would mean that from Ben Hadad III until Hazael II there could be two more kings with an average reign of 24 years.

f. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 655.

g. The year 732 BCE was the year that the Assyrian King Tiglath-pileser III killed Rezin of Aram-Damascus and absorbed the Damascenes into the Assyrian Empire and exiled them into an area called “Kir” (2 Kgs 16:9). During this process of exiling of these indigenous conquered peoples, it was standard Assyrian/Babylonian practice to appoint governors to supervise that transition period. The names of these governors represent the two extra kings mentioned by Nicholas of Damascus making up the total of the 10 Syrian kings of that initial royal family that he alluded to (see note e above). The names of these governors, according to the annals of rival Assyrian King Shalmaneser III, just so happened to be Hadad-ezer and Hazael — names which previously were kings during the time of Ahab and Jehu I in the 870 BCE time frame. So, the question here is, does this represent a snag into the entire thesis proposed herein? No! Why? Because the chronology of those Assyrian kings and dates attributed to them does not fit with the chronology of the Masoretic text. And this explanation cannot in any way compromise that fact. But modern-day secular scholarship has no problem with compromising the Biblical figures in order to defend their false reconstruction of, not only Egyptian history, but also the false reconstruction of Assyrian history as well. The names mentioned in rival Assyrian king Shalmaneser’s annals may not have been the names of these governors, but since the Assyrians pushed back the time of Shalmaneser 124 years before his time, they simply used the names of the kings of Aram that lived at that time to solidify their deception. And modern scholars have bought into that deceit hook, line, and sinker. Nevertheless, this will be a primary argument of modern secular scholarship against the chronology proposed herein, which have no loyalty to the Biblical text but only to an ancient Assyrian subterfuge.

Conclusion — Biblical Chronology Finally Restored

We are now at a point where we can confidently state that the task that we have embarked upon is both complete, but at the same time just beginning. The chronology of the Old Testament is at long last firmly established in these last days. And what are the walk-aways from this study?

- 1) That Abram was born in his father’s 70th year — not his 130th;
- 2) That the 430 years of Exodus 12:40 to the Exodus is counted from when the Covenant was confirmed at Abraham’s one-hundredth year (not 400 years according to the *Seder Olam*);
- 3) That the 400 years of Genesis 15:13 is actually counted from the death of Abraham to the dividing up of the inheritances in the 83rd year of Caleb;
- 4) That the Kingdom of Judah lasted 390 years — not 393 years — from the death of Solomon to destruction of the Temple;
- 5) That the year of the destruction of the Temple occurred in 587 BCE — not in 586 BCE.

If only Biblical chronologists just had these clues they too could have resolved the mystery of Biblical chronology that has eluded chronological studies for so long. Then again, if one believed that the death and resurrection of Jesus occurred in the year of 30 CE, one could have simply just added 2000 years to that figure and would have come up with the same conclusion that 2030 was 2000 years thereafter. However, it just may be that this knowledge had to have been sealed to the time of the end just as Daniel was told (Dan 12:9-13). The 2030 phenomenon is already starting to catch on as a significant event in the episode of humankind. And I am fortunate that I have been able to contribute to that exciting phenomenon.

The next step is to confront the false chronologies of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, *etc.*, in volume two. Ancient history will then finally make sense as never before. In volume three the true chronology of the New Testament will be restored.

We have only just begun to scratch the surface of the marvelous and new exciting vistas that will shape future studies in ancient chronologies yet to emerge. The reader must realize that this is not just another book on Biblical chronology. It is the beginning of an entire new journey.

The time is now to move on. It is time to start a new era in chronological studies. Stay tuned — this exciting journey has only just begun.

APPENDIX 1

CHRONOLOGY — BIBLICAL VERSUS EGYPTIAN

*W*E ARE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE SIX THOUSAND YEARS ALLOTTED TO THE FAMILY OF Adam. The chronology presented in this volume is that of the revelation to the human family via the canonized words of those who were given divine revelation. It is *not* myth. It is *not* something that somebody just made up out of their heads. What is at stake is that if the chronology of the Bible is untrue, then pray tell, what in the Bible is? It is as if the chronology of the Bible was divinely put there for the specific purpose as to whether the Bible is true or not by that measure alone. It is a test to those who are supposed to, as the Apostle Paul said: “test everything; hold fast to what is good” (1 Thess 5:21).

But wait a minute, Apostle Paul, did you just say test “everything”? What about Biblical chronology? Can we put that to the test? And how does one in fact put that to the test? On what milestone do we test Biblical chronology? Do we test it against what modern scholars have come up with as far as what they have concocted as regards to the chronology of Egypt? After all, modern scholars test the Bible against their perceived notion of ancient Egyptian chronology. And guess what? They found that the Bible does not measure up to their model. Wow, what a surprise!

We need to stop this nonsense about, “well, the Bible is not a history book, but a book of faith.” This needs to stop right now! That is a cop out! This is not a game anymore. Stop it! Abraham existed. Moses existed. David existed. Jesus existed. And their spatial existence on this planet was given to us in a carefully documented text of Scripture which also has been divinely preserved to this day.

Who are you going to put your trust in? Modern scholars? Why? Because they think that they are the final word in what is true and what is not true concerning ancient history and, especially, the Bible? Do they presume to be the divinely inspired representatives of truth on earth? Yes, they do! What is wrong with this picture? We need to stop and come to grips with reality. It is not the Bible that is a myth — it is modern theories of Egyptian history that is.

One of the most important things that we need to understand is that the Bible contains much chronological data. Did you ever ask, why? This is the fundamental question that must be asked today. Think of it! Why, indeed, is this supposed “book of faith” so concerned about chronology? Is there a specific reason? Yes, there is. Why was it so important for that chronological data be preserved to the time of the end of human experience? And why is it finally and fully revealed to us at this very age and time? If there is no reason, then this excursion into this matter is just another entertaining digression into what — wishful thinking?

This author believes that now is the time for us all to take things seriously concerning the time that we are now living in respect to the outline of history given in the revelation that has been preserved down through the ages until now. However, there is a serious problem that is put before us that is in total contradiction to that revelation. And what is that problem? Modern scholarship!

Modern scholarship thinks it knows better and has supplanted an alternative ancient chronology that is nothing more than a deliberate attempt to, not only overthrow Biblical chronology, but the entire idea of divine revelation altogether.

When the Apostle Paul said “Test everything” he meant everything, did he not? Yes, everything! Okay, everything includes Biblical chronology, does it not? That means that the “test” that is incumbent upon the reader of this book must include all the chronological data of the Biblical revelation, does it not? Chronology, thus, is not some sideline study. It is, in one sense, what the history of the entire Bible is all about. It is not only history, but prophecy. When we look at it with this purpose, then is there any other subject that is more important than chronology concerning the experience of human existence on this earth? If Biblical chronology is on the line, then the veracity of the entire Biblical revelation stands or falls on this very subject alone. Either the chronology of the Bible is true or nothing in the Bible is true. This appendix is a sneak preview of what is coming in volume 2. Let us now rehearse some basics in order to understand the problem.

Modern Historians Do Not Have the Answers

Do not look to modern scholars for the answers to ancient history because they admittedly do not have them. Their erudite works betray their lack of answers, couching their phrases in conjecture and speculation:

Remove from a library shelf any volume on world history or ancient man and examine its opening chapters. In it will be [filled with] such expressions as: “it is thought,” “there appears to be some basis for believing,” “it has been suggested,” “it may be presumed,” “one may safely assume,” and “others are of the opinion” — just to mention a few.

What do all these carefully chosen expressions really signify? Just this: that no demonstrable evidence really exists for accepting as a fact what has been written in the textbook. It is mere speculation!

The modern reconstruction of ancient history without God is almost 100% erroneous. And no wonder! It is derived from only a part of the historical sources that are available. It casts aside as “myth” factual and datable evidence of the past merely because God appeared in that evidence. Without it, the modern historian is able only to theorize about the time or the place man appeared upon the earth. He cannot know. When these written records are rejected, not even archaeologists or geologists can come to the historians’ aid and provide adequate dating.⁷⁹²

⁷⁹² Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:19-20.

Chronology — Biblical versus Egyptian

So, having rejected the Biblical revelation, how were scholars to build a history that not only overturned the chronology of Scripture, but established an entire new yardstick that bolstered their anti-Biblical bias. But, alas, historians found a credible escape that allowed them a way out of their dilemma. They put their trust in not divine revelation, but in a single person who became their Saviour. And who was that Saviour? It was not God. It was a person by the name of “Manetho.”⁷⁹³

Manetho — Grand-Poobah of Ancient Egyptian History

Yes, it was a person by the name of “Manetho” who gets the all time award for providing modern scholars their means of escape from the testimony of Scripture. Yes, Manetho became not only the person who organized all the pharaohs into thirty dynasties, but by doing so he alone was able to push Egyptian history back further than could be sustained by Biblical chronology. And that fact alone allowed scholars to free themselves from any thought that there could be a divine purpose in life. And that was the real jackpot that Manetho provided.

Ancient Egypt was the key to unraveling all of ancient history, so it was thought. But it could not be reconstructed unless there was a road map that made sense of it all. And it was the writings of Manetho that made it all possible.

Archaeology could not always determine which Egyptian monuments and which kings reigns came first. There were no buried cities, one above another, as in Mesopotamia. No stratigraphy to determine the exact order of events. The only solution was to adopt the traditional dynastic history of Egypt. It is based on the Greek versions of Manetho, an Egyptian priest and historian, who drew up the history of ancient Egypt under thirty dynasties.⁷⁹⁴

But the question that was never asked, but merely assumed was, were these thirty dynasties in consecutive order? Jack Finegan explains:

In the arrangement of ... Egyptian materials within a framework of **consecutive dynasties**, all modern historians are dependent upon an ancient predecessor. This was an Egyptian priest and writer named Manetho who lived under Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 B.C.). Manetho was born at Sebennytus (now Samannud) in the Delta. Eventually he rose to be high priest in the temple at Heliopolis. Berossos of Babylon, was practically a contemporary, and the two priests became rivals in the proclamation of the antiquity and greatness of their respective lands.⁷⁹⁵

Notice the phrase “consecutive dynasties.” It was that little gem that was planted into the consciousness of all modern scholars. The door was open for a major assumption that was never seriously questioned. But, why would they? Indeed, consecutive dynasties? Why, that was just the affirmation that scholars were looking for. Such a solution allowed modern scholars to unshackle themselves from the chronology of the Bible once and for all. But, by throwing off the shackles of Biblical chronology, modern scholars willing and with open arms embraced another straight jacket.

Egyptologist, Sir Alan Gardiner, however, was one scholar who could see through all of this and realized that by accepting Manetho’s 30 dynasty scheme modern scholars had in fact enslaved themselves to the “shackles” of another more devious subjugation:

⁷⁹³ Egyptian priest who wrote a history of Egypt in Greek, probably commissioned by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BCE).

⁷⁹⁴ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:35-36.

⁷⁹⁵ Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*, 1:76, 78 (emphasis the author’s).

That I have devoted so much discussion to what survives of Manetho ... will need no excuse for those familiar with the evolution of our science; **no Egyptologist has yet been able to free himself from the shackles imposed by the native annalist's thirty Dynasties**, and these are likely always to remain the essential framework of our modern expositions.⁷⁹⁶

If renowned scholars like Sir Alan Gardiner could on the one hand lament over the enslavement of modern scholarship to Manetho's deceptive scheme, but then say that it is likely to always remain "the essential framework of our modern expositions" then he too, like all modern day scholars, have fallen under Manetho's spell with his blessing. Gardiner thus sealed the deal with:

In Manetho's work the entire history of Egypt, after the reigns of the gods and the demi-gods, was divided up into thirty-one dynasties of royal families beginning with Menes and ending with Alexander the Great's conquest in 332 B.C. In spite of all the defects this division into dynasties has taken so firm a root in the literature of Egyptology that there is little chance of it ever being abandoned.⁷⁹⁷

Even though Gardiner bemoaned the glaring inaccuracies of Manetho, he still pointed out that:

In the forms in which the book has reached us there are inaccuracies of the most glaring kind ... None the less his book still dominates our studies ...⁷⁹⁸

Yes, indeed it does. The fact that some scholars as far back as Eusebius could see that Manetho's 30 dynasty scheme pushed Egyptian history back further into the past than other surrounding nations and certainly beyond what the Biblical revelation could accommodate should have been a clue that something was seriously wrong with Manetho's 30 dynasty scheme.

Even though some Egyptologists began to see that some of these dynasties seemed like inconsequential local ruling houses of various cities whose authority only extended to their provincial Nome, that had little effect in turning everything at this point.

The Manethonian Dynasties ... are not lists of rulers over all Egypt, but lists partly of more or less independent princes, partly ... of princely lines from which later sprang rulers over all Egypt. Some were mere Mayors of the Palace or princelets maintaining a precarious independence, of ever more subordinate Governor of nomes, from whom, however, descended subsequent monarchs.⁷⁹⁹

Egyptian Dynasties — The Pancake Stack

Much of the internal data of the various Egyptian dynasties were accurate, but much of it has

come down to us only in copies of copies; and, although the framework of the dynasties remains, most of his royal names, originally Graecized, have been so mutilated by non-Egyptian scribes, who did not understand their form, as often to be unrecognizable, and the regnal years given by him have been so corrupted as to be of little value unless confirmed by the Turin Papyrus or the monuments.⁸⁰⁰

Notice that H. R. Hall, even after admitting that Manetho's work came down to us in shambles, still believed that "although the framework of the dynasties remains ... *da, da, da.*" He and other Egyptologists to this day still refuse to take Gardiner's and Nicklin's words to heart. But the fact of the matter is that

⁷⁹⁶ Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, viii (emphasis the author's).

⁷⁹⁷ Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 47. Note that the 31st dynasty "was added later to preserve the continuity" Waddell, *Manetho*, 184.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 47-48.

⁷⁹⁹ T. Nicklin, *Studies in Egyptian Chronology* (Blackburn: Geo. Toulmin & Sons, Ltd., 1928), 30.

⁸⁰⁰ H. R. Hall, *Cambridge Ancient History*, 1:260, cited from Manetho, *History of Egypt*, xxv.

Chronology — Biblical versus Egyptian

Manetho cleverly told the history of the ruling families of each city, then attached them end to end to make Egypt appear the oldest and earliest unified nation on earth.⁸⁰¹

The internal dates of each dynasty's kings certainly must have been based on correct data from the monuments and the Egyptian priest's king lists gathered by Manetho. But it is not the data itself that was so much the problem. The real problem was that Manetho took his thirty dynasties of ruling families from different cities and stacked them one on top of each other like a stack of pancakes to make it look like that there was only one ruling family at a time governing all of Egypt from its beginning to its very end.

... there is one factor that early scholars chose to ignore. They happily added up all the lengths of reigns and years of dynasties given by Manetho and came up with some huge figures for the dates assigned to these rulers and dynasties. They mostly ignored Eusebius' statement that "several Egyptian kings ruled at the same time. ... It was not a succession of kings occupying the throne one after the other, but several kings reigning at the same time in different regions."⁸⁰²

But what was the motive for Manetho to pile the different dynasties end to end as he did?

The Rivalry of Manetho and Berossos

Professor Waddell, the translator of Manetho's surviving materials, revealed that

The works of Manetho and Berossos may be interpreted as an expression of the rivalry of the two kings, Ptolemy and Antiochus, each seeking to proclaim the great antiquity of the land.⁸⁰³

Professor Waddell hit the nail on the head. Let us pursue this further:

In Manetho's time this spirit of competition reached a climax. Egypt and Babylonia were vying with each other for influence over the Greek-speaking world. Each sought to be known as the founder of civilization, of cultural and religious institutions, of political unity. Vanity was coupled in both by a deep sense of inferiority, for both were peoples subject to the Greeks. To rise above that feeling, each claimed to be the first people of earth, not alone in the sense of civilization, but in the sense of time.

To justify their claims to antiquity, Manetho and Berossos utilized their early records, the king lists of the various cities, and cleverly marshalled them together in consecutive order. Manetho summarized the history of Egypt under the rule of thirty dynasties, or ruling houses, from the royal cities of Abydos, Memphis, Elephantine, Heracleopolis, Xoïs, Thebes, Tanis, Bubastis, Sais and other cities. The history of the royal families of each city was drawn up to make it appear that only one city at a time dominated Egypt, and that Egypt was, from its beginning, under the government of only one ruler at a time. The result was that Egypt appeared to be extremely ancient and the first land to establish unity — thousands of years before the Greek city-states were united. It was a fraud!⁸⁰⁴

⁸⁰¹ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:40.

⁸⁰² Ashton and Down, *Unwrapping the Pharaohs*, 73, citing Eusebius from the Armenian Version of the *Chronicon* in Manetho, *History of Egypt*, 9.

⁸⁰³ Manetho, *History of Egypt*, translated by William G. Waddell. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940), x.

⁸⁰⁴ Hoeh, *Compendium*, 1:39-40.

What's Wrong with Egyptian Chronology?

The chronology of the ancient world — whether Egyptian, Assyrian, or Babylonian — can be considered accurate up until about the middle of the eighth century BCE. Prior to that time, our sources become unreliable and untrustworthy due to the fact that the king lists and other material have been tampered with by scribes of the sixth century BCE to create the illusion of single monarchies dominating their entire empire ruling from time immemorial. This is the deceitful myth that modern scholars have so eagerly swallowed. Modern scholarship is perpetuating nothing more than a ridiculous ancient deception. The reason for this dilemma is that they have thrown out the only guide to put it all accurately together. Indeed, this then was used to bolster the false idea that it was the Biblical the source that was wrong and could be proven by the fact that Egyptian chronology alone drives us to that erroneous conclusion.

Speaking of “the difficult topic of chronology” as far as Egypt is concerned, again Sir Alan Gardiner once again scrutinized the following:

If in dating their inscriptions and papyri the Egyptians had employed a consecutive era like our own or like that which the Muhammedans reckon from the Flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina, no serious chronological problem would have arisen. Unfortunately for us from Dyn. XI onwards each king counted only by the years of his own reign, and for the earliest dynasties there are still further complications. ... In the earlier days of Egyptology its adepts accepted the evidence of Manetho with a childlike credulity which had as its only excuse the absence or shortage of more trustworthy information, and **today there are still certain scholars not wholly innocent of this erroneous mode of calculation.** It is useless here to repeat what had been stated above as to the **untrustworthiness of Manetho**, at least in the form which it has come down to us.⁸⁰⁵

When scholars speak of the “untrustworthiness of Manetho,” then Manetho cannot be the reliable guide to ancient Egyptian chronology that is supposed to overthrow the chronology of the Bible. The reconstruction of Manetho’s thirty dynasties has resulted in a chronology of Egypt that is some 800 years earlier than where the Bible places it. In volume 2 of this series Manetho’s dynasties will be restored to their correct positions in history. Once that is done, Biblical as well as Egyptian history will finally make sense.

Study the following charts. They graphically give us an overall view of the nature of the problem. It shows us that it is the Hyksos period that is the key of realigning Egyptian history to the time of the Judges in Biblical history. Once that is done, then we can reconstruct history as it should be, as shown in figure 2.

⁸⁰⁵ Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 61 (emphasis the author’s).

Chronology — Biblical versus Egyptian

Figure 1 — Comparison of Biblical Chronology with Egyptian Chronology.

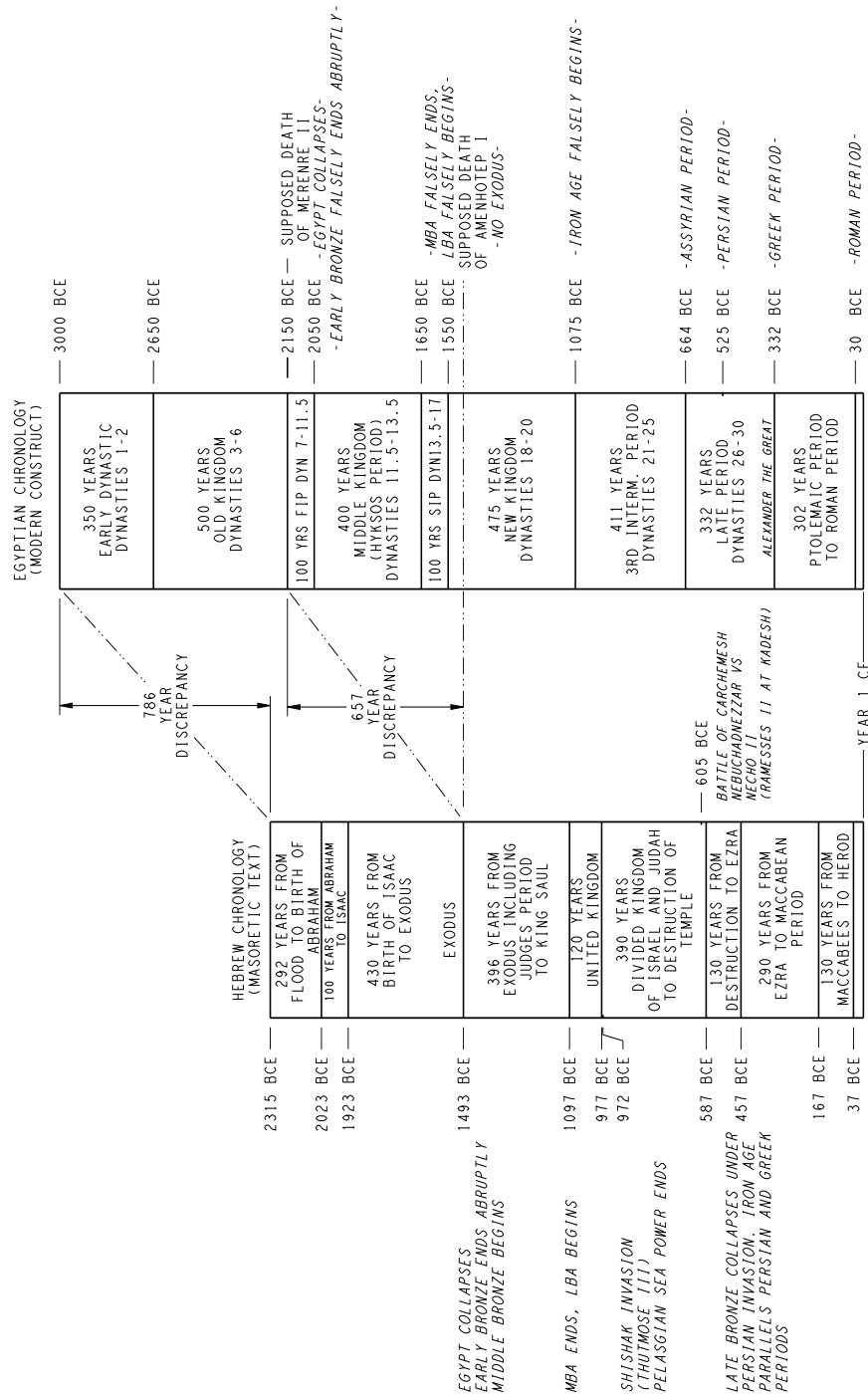


Figure 2 — Realignment of Egyptian chronology to Biblical chronology.

| | | |
|--|--|------------------------|
| <p>TOWER OF BABEL</p> <p>TIME OF ABRAHAM ISAAC, JACOB, JOSEPH, AND MOSES</p> <p>EXODUS UNDER MOSES</p> | <p>OLD KINGDOM OF EGYPT</p> <p>PYRAMID AGE DYNASTIES 1 - 6</p> <p>PARALLEL WITH DYNASTIES 7- 13</p> <p>COLLAPSE OF DYNASTY 6</p> | <p>2200</p> |
| <p>JUDGES PERIOD 400 YEARS</p> <p>DARK AGE IN ISRAEL</p> <p>END OF JUDGES PERIOD</p> | <p>HYKSOS PERIOD 400 YEARS</p> <p>DARK AGE IN EGYPT</p> <p>END OF HYKSOS PERIOD</p> | <p>1500</p> |
| <p>KINGS SAUL, DAVID, AND SOLOMON</p> <p>AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT</p> <p>DIVIDED KINGDOM</p> <p>FALL OF JERUSALEM 587</p> | <p>"NEW KINGDOM" DYNASTIES 18, 19</p> <p>AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT</p> <p>PARALLEL DYNASTIES 20-30</p> <p>PERSIAN INVASION 525</p> | <p>1100</p> <p>500</p> |

Figure 2 will now form the basis for reconstructing ancient history in volume 2 of this series. Egyptian history is not a barrier to establishing a true Biblical history after all. The answer to resolving ancient Egyptian history was right there all along, but alas, it was concealed within the fog of modern day mythology.

Finally, at long last, the scales of darkness are stripped from our eyes. It is beautiful in its simplicity. It is no less than divine revelation unsurpassed. It represents what is needed to correct and establish how to reconstruct ancient Egyptian history, as well as all of ancient history, with that of the Bible once and for all. The time has come to reassure ourselves with the Biblical narrative and the facts of history. This will do in volume 2.

APPENDIX 2

THE DIVIDED MONARCHY SPREAD SHEET

*T***HIS** AUTHOR BECAME INTERESTED IN BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY AT A YOUNG AGE. He became enamored with the work of Edwin R. Thiele, and his “ladder charts.” His arguments seemed to make sense at the time, including the concept that ancient Judah followed a Fall-to-Fall calendar, and in Israel they followed a Spring-to-Spring calendar; and the premise being that the year in which the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed supposedly occurred in the year of 586 BCE. And then there was this remarkable statement that seemed to clinch the deal the deal for me:

The best argument for the correctness of the above outline of chronological procedure among the Hebrews is that *it works*, giving us a chronological scheme of the kings of Israel and Judah in which there is internal consistency and which harmonizes with the chronological pattern of neighboring states. When these principles are applied to the Hebrew kings, it will be found that the irritating discrepancies that have so long baffled and perplexed students of Old Testament history will at length disappear.⁸⁰⁶

The “it works” argument, however, turned out to be nothing more than a slight of hand trick. Then, 586 BCE premise fell by the wayside with the publication of the *Babylonian Chronicles* in the year of 1956 by Donald J. Wiseman. It was with that publication that a notable shift in scholarly opinion went from 586 to 587 BCE.⁸⁰⁷ Why? What ever could be the reason for that? One of the reasons was summed up by C. Eermal:

A collection of clay tablets excavated in Babylon, known as the Babylonian Chronicles, were purchased by the British Museum in the 19th century. The tablet shown here, translated by Donald J. Wiseman in 1956, recorded the last (21st) year of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, and the first 11 years of his son Nebuchadnezzar. Among Nebuchadnezzar’s accomplishments was his capture of Jerusalem, dated precisely to March 16, 597 BC. The Bible tells the story from the side of the defeated nation. The Babylonian Chronicle described the story from the victor’s side. Of no real surprise to us, they agree!⁸⁰⁸

⁸⁰⁶ Thiele, *Mysterious Numbers*, 38 (emphasis the author’s).

⁸⁰⁷ See comments by Freedy and Redford, “Dates in Ezekiel,” 464; Jones, “*Chronology*,” 23.

Indeed, in a thorough treatment of the subject by David J. A. Clines, he gets the last word:

The conclusion reached in this study is this: **the balance of evidence points towards the use of Nisan reckoning of regnal years in the closing decades of the kingdom of Judah.** Of the three arguments in favour of Tishri reckoning, two (§§1.1, 2) have been shown to be inconclusive, since the date they rest upon is susceptible of reasonable explanation in a Nisan system; the third argument (§1.3) uses a date which requires Tishri reckoning but which also carries with it several improbable corollaries. Of the two arguments in favour of Nisan reckoning, the first (§2.1) is clear evidence for a Nisan system, and the second (§2.2) suggests that a Nisan system is more probable than not.⁸⁰⁹

We must put the 586 BCE date for the destruction of Jerusalem finally behind us. Scholars, such as Edwin R. Thiele, Abraham Malamat, Donald B. Redford, Jack Finegan, Gershon Galil, and a host of other scholars who maintained the premise that Jerusalem fell in 586 BCE should have acknowledged their error immediately after the publication of the *Babylonian Chronicles* in 1956. However, they were in no position to admit their error, so they chose to double down on their 586 BCE positions, choosing to save face with arguments that have only shown us a lack of honesty and poor scholarship. The tangled web that they spun turned out to be more persuasive in their minds than the truth staring themselves in the face. Thiele still relied on his “it works” argument hoping that no one could challenge it. We are here open to the challenge.

Okay, if the “it works” contention is so essential to maintaining Thiele’s thesis, would it work based upon the real facts of the reconstructed chronology presented herein, based on the Masoretic chronology (with help from Josephus), a Spring-to-Spring calendar in Judah, throwing off the shackles of false Assyrian synchronizations, and with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem now firmly established in the year of 587 BCE? And, guess what? “It works” perfectly well without all of the weak arguments of the past.

Here, for the first time is finally presented a chart that proves that it works. Let us now see how well “it works” and how neatly it all fits together with the following charts. With that being said, what will be the excuse the five-eighty-sixers come up with next?

⁸⁰⁸ C. Eral Allen, “Jerusalem Fell in 587 Not 586 BC,” *Bible and Spade*, Winter 2005 (18:1): 26.

⁸⁰⁹ David J. A. Clines, “Regnal Year Reckoning in the Last Years of the Kingdom of Judah,” *The Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology* 2 (1972): 34.

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.1 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | 979 | SOLOMON 38 | | |
| | | | 978 | 39 | | |
| | | | 977 | 40 AC | | |
| Jeroboam, 22 yrs, 1 Kgs 14:20 | Years of the Kingdom of Israel | 1 | 976 | 1 | 1 | |
| | | 2 | 975 | 2 | 2 | |
| | | 3 | 974 | 3 | 3 | |
| | | 4 | 973 | 4 | 4 | |
| | | 5 | 972 | 5 | 5 | |
| Pelagian Sea Power (Israel/Phoenicia) collapses at the invasion of Shishak | | 6 | 971 | 6 | 6 | |
| | | 7 | 970 | 7 | 7 | |
| | | 8 | 969 | 8 | 8 | |
| | | 9 | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

SOLOMON
39

Begin of
count of yrs
of division

Rehoboam, 17 yrs,
1 Kgs 14:21

Shishak of Egypt attacks
in Rehoboam's year 5,
1 Kgs 14:25-6

Figure 3.2 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|----|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | 16 | 16 | 961 | Rehoboam 16 | 16 | |
| | 17 | Jeroboam 17 | 960 | 17 | 17 | Abijam 3 yrs, 18th of Jeroboam, 1 Kgs 15:1-2; 2 Chr 13:1,2 |
| | 18 | 18 | 959 | AC | | |
| | 19 | 19 | 958 | 1 | 18 | |
| | 20 | 20 | 957 | 2 | 19 | |
| | 21 | 21 | 956 | 3 AC | 20 | Asa 41 yrs, 20th of Jeroboam 1 Kgs 15:8-10; 2 Chr 13:1-2 |
| Nadab, 2 years, 2nd of Asa, 1 Kgs 15:25-26 | 22 | 22 1 | 955 | 1 | 21 | |
| Baasha, 24 years, 3rd of Asa, 1 Kgs 15:28, 33 | 23 | 2 1 | 954 | 2 3 | 22 23 | |
| | 24 | 2 | 953 | 4 | 24 | |
| | 25 | 3 | 952 | 5 | 25 | |
| | 26 | 4 | 951 | 6 | 26 | |
| | 27 | 5 | | | | |

Figure 3.3 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|---|----|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | 33 | 11 | 944 | | | |
| | 34 | 12 | 943 | 13 | 33 | |
| | 35 | Baasha 13 | 942 | Asa 14 | 34 | |
| Baasha builds Ramah in 36th year of the Kingdom, 2 Chr 16:1 | 36 | 14 | | 15 | 35 | Zerah attacks Asa in his 15th year, 2 Chr 14:9-15, 15:10 |
| | | 15 | 941 | 16 | 36 | Asa in league with Ben- Hadad of Syria. |
| | | | 940 | 17 | 37 | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.4 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| | 22 | | | |
| | Baasha 23 | 933 | Asa 24 | 44 |
| | | 932 | | |
| | 24 | | 25 | 45 |
| Elah, 2 yrs, 26th of Asa, 1 Kgs 16:8 | 1 | 931 | | |
| Zimri 7 days 1 Kgs 16:15; | | | 26 | 46 |
| Tibni, 6 rivals, Omri 12 yrs, Omri / (Tibni) 1 Kgs 16:23 | 2 1 (1) | 930 | | |
| | | | 27 | 47 |
| | 2 (2) | 929 | | |
| | | | 28 | 48 |
| | 3 (3) | 928 | | |
| | | | 29 | 49 |
| | 4 (4) | 927 | | |
| | | | 30 | 50 |
| | 5 (5) | 926 | | |
| | | | 31 | 51 |
| Omri, 31st of Asa sole reign begins after Tibni eliminated, 1 Kgs 16:22, 23 | 6 (6) | 925 | | |
| | | | 32 | 52 |
| | 7 | 924 | | |
| | | | 33 | 53 |

Figure 3.5 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | 10 | 921 | | | |
| | Tibni 11 | | Asa 36 | 56 | |
| | | 920 | 37 | 57 | |
| Ahab, 22 yrs, 38th of Asa, 1 Kgs 16:29 | 12 / 1 | | | | |
| | | 919 | 38 | 58 | |
| | 2 | | | | |
| | | 918 | 39 | 59 | Asa's disease in his 39th year, 2nd of Ahab 2 Chr 16:12 |
| | 3 | 917 | | | |
| Elijah, enters in the 4th year of Ahab | | 916 | 40 | 60 | |
| | 4 | | | | |
| | | 915 | 41 / AC | 61 | Jehoshaphat 25 yrs, 4th of Ahab, 1 Kgs 22:41-2; 2 Chr 20:31 |
| 3 year famine | 5 | | 1 | 62 | |
| | 6 | 914 | | | |
| | | 913 | 2 | 63 | |
| | 7 | | | | |
| | | 912 | 3 | 64 | Book of the Law read in the 3rd of Jehoshaphat 2 Chr 17:3-9 |
| | 8 | | 4 | 65 | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.6 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | 21 | 899 | Jehoshaphat 17 | 78 | |
| Ahaziah 2 yrs, 17th of Jehoshaphat, 1 Kgs 22:51-2 | 22 | 898 | → 18 | 79 | Jehoshaphat goes out with Ahab against Ben-Hadad. Ahab slain in battle with Syrians |
| Joram 12 yrs, 18th of Jehoshaphat, 2nd of Jehoram, 2 Kgs 1:17, 3:1, Joram adopts accession system | 2 | 897 | → 19 | 80 | |
| | AC | 896 | 20 | 81 | |
| | 1 | 895 | 21 | 82 | |
| | 2 | 894 | 22 | 83 | |
| | 3 | 893 | 23 (1) | | Jehoram, 5th of Joram, 8 yrs, 2 Kgs 8:16, 17 |
| | 4 | 892 | 24 (2) | 84 | |
| | 5 | 891 | 25 (3) | 85 | |
| | 6 | 890 | 4 | 86 | Jehoshaphat dies; sole rule of Jehoram |
| | 7 | | | 87 | |

Figure 3.7 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | 10 | 887 | Jehoram 7 | 90 | |
| | Joram 11 | 886 | | | |
| | 12 | | 8 AC | 91 | Ahaziah 1 yr, 11th of Joram 2 Kgs 8:25-26; 12th of Joram, 2 Kgs 9:29 |
| Jehu, 28 years, 2 Kgs 10:36, slays Ahaziah and Jehoram at the same time. | AC | 885 | 1 AC | 92 | Athaliah 7 yrs, 2 Kgs 11:21; 12:1 |
| | 1 | 884 | | | |
| | 2 | 883 | 1 | 93 | |
| | 3 | 882 | 2 | 94 | |
| | 4 | 881 | 3 | 95 | |
| | 5 | 880 | 4 | 96 | |
| | 6 | 879 | 6 | 97 | |
| | 7 | 878 | 7 | 98 | Jehoash, age 7, 40 years, 7th of Jehu, 2 Kgs 12:1-2 |
| | | | AC | | |
| | | | 1 | 99 | |

Figure 3.8 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | 26 Jehu | 859 | Jehoash 20 | 118 | |
| Jehu dies | [27] | 858 | | | |
| Jehoahaz, 17 years, 21st of Joash, Josephus <i>Ant.</i> 9.8.1.5. (Numbers in brackets are those of the MT [2 Kgs 13:1] which has Jehu reigning 28 years and dying in the 23rd of Joash. Data from Josephus realigns the data with the MT. (2 Kgs 13:1) | AC | | 21 | 119 | |
| | 1 [28] | 857 | 22 | 120 | |
| | 2 [1] | | 23 | 121 | |
| | 3 [2] | 855 | 24 | 122 | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.9 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| | | | 35 | 133 |
| | 15 [14] Jehoahaz | 843 | Joash 36 | 134 |
| | 16 [15] | 842 | | |
| Jehoash, 16 years, 37th of Joash, 2 Kgs 13:10 | 17 [16] AC | 841 | 37 | 135 |
| By Josephus' numbers Israel now returns to accession year system | [17] 1 | 840 | 38 | 136 |
| | 2 | 839 | 39 | 137 |
| | 3 | 838 | 40 AC | 138 |
| | 4 | 837 | 1 | 139 |
| Jeroboam begins to co-reign with his father, Jehoash, 2 Ki 14:23, 15:1 | 5 AC | 836 | 2 | 140 |
| | | | 3 | 141 |

Figure 3.10 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| | 15 (10) | 826 | Amaziah 13 | 151 |
| | 16 (11) | 825 | | |
| Jehoash dies in year 14 of Amaziah of Judah beginning his year 15, yet 15 years later when Azariah (Uzziah) ascends to the throne, this is year 27 of Jeroboam II. This is proof that Jeroboam co-reigned with his father 11 years | (AC) (12) | 824 | 14 | 152 |
| | [1] (13) | 823 | 15 | 153 |
| | | | 16 | 154 |

Figure 3.11 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | 811 | Amaziah 28 | 166 | Josephus stated Azariah acceded in 14th yr of Jeroboam, <i>Ant.</i> 9:10:3. |
| | [14] (26) | 810 | 29 AC | | |
| | [15] (27) | | | 167 | Azariah, 52 yrs, 27th of Jeroboam, 2 Kgs 15:1-2 |
| | | 809 | 1 | 168 | |

Figure 3.12 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----|
| No king in Israel for a 11 year interregnum | Jeroboam flees upon earthquake | | 785 | Azariah 25 | 192 | Amos prophosied 2 yrs before earthquake, Amos 1:1, 8:8 | |
| | | [40] (52) | | 784 | 26 | | 193 |
| | | [41] (53) | | 783 | | | 27 |
| | | 1 | 54 | | | | |

Figure 3.13 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 10 | 63 Jeroboam | 36 | 203 | Jeroboam returns to throne, but dies soon after. |
| 11 | 64 AC | Azariah 37 | 204 | |
| | | 38 | 205 | Zechariah 6 mo., 38th of Azariah, 2 Kgs 15:8 |
| | 6 mo. | 771 | | Shallum, 1 mo., 39th of Azariah |
| | 1 mo. | 39 | 206 | Menahem 10 yrs, 39th of Azariah, 2 Kgs 15:17 |
| | AC | 770 | | |
| 1 | | 40 | 207 | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.14 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | 14 | 233 | |
| 15 Pekah | 743 | Jotham 15 | 234 | |
| 16 | 742 | 16 | | Ahaz, age 20, reigns 16 yrs, 17th of Pekah, 2 Kgs 16:1-2 |
| 17 | 741 | AC | 235 | |
| 18 | | 1 | 236 | |
| 19 | 740 | 2 | 237 | |
| 20 | 739 | 3 | 238 | |
| AC | 738 | 4 | 239 | |
| 1 | 737 | 5 | 240 | |

Hoshea slays Pekah in 20th of Jotham,
Tiglath-pileser III installs Ahab II (not
recognized in Bible) in the fourth of Ahaz

Figure 3.15 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 8 Hoshea | 730 | | | |
| 9 | | Ahaz 12 | 247 | |
| AC | 729 | 13 | 248 | |
| 1 | 728 | 14 | 249 | |
| 2 | 727 | 15 | 250 | |
| 3 | | 16 | 251 | Hezekiah 29 yrs, age 25, 3rd of Hoshea, 2 Kgs 18:1- 2; 2 Chron 29:1 |
| 4 | 725 | AC | | |
| | | 1 | 252 | |

Hoshea returns to the throne in the 12th of
Ahaz 1 Kgs 17:1

Figure 3.16 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Jehu II, son of Omri, is appointed by Shalmaneser to conduct final affairs of Israel after Israel goes into captivity. | 7 | 722 ← | | | 4th of Hezekiah, Shalmaneser besieges Samaria, 2 Kgs 18:9, 10 |
| | 8 | 721 | 4 | 255 | |
| | 9 | 720 ← | 5 | 256 | First full year of Sargon |
| | AC | | 6 | 257 | |
| | 1 | 719 | 7 | 258 | 6th yr of Hezekiah, Samaria falls, 1 Kgs 18:10 |
| | 2 | 718 | 8 | 259 | |
| | 3 | 717 | 9 | 260 | |
| | 4 | 716 | 10 | 261 | |
| | 5 | 715 | 11 | 262 | |
| | 6 | 714 | 12 | 263 | |
| | ↓ | 713 | 13 | 264 | |
| | ? | | | | |

Figure 3.17 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Sickness of Hezekiah defeats Sennacherib, granted additional 15 yrs | | 712 ← | Hezekiah 14 | 265 | Sennacherib is defeated loses 185,000 forces |
| | 1 | 711 | 15 | 266 | |
| | | | | | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.18 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | 14 | 698 | Hezekiah 28 | 279 | |
| Hezekiah dies. Succeeded by his son, Manasseh | 15 | 697 | 29 AC | 280 | Manasseh, age 12, 55 yrs, 2 Kgs 21:1 |
| | | 696 | 1 | 281 | |
| | | | | | |

Figure 3.19 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|---------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | 48 | 328 | |
| Age of Josiah | | 648 | 49 | 329 | Birth of Josiah, who was prophesied 340 years earlier, 1 Kgs 13:2 |
| 1 | | 647 | 50 | 330 | |
| 2 | | 646 | 51 | 331 | |
| 3 | | 645 | 52 | 332 | |
| 4 | | 644 | 53 | 333 | |
| 5 | | 643 | 54 | 334 | |
| 6 | | 642 | 55 AC | 335 | Amon, age 22, 2 yrs, 2 Kgs 21:19 |
| 7 | | 641 | 1 | 336 | |
| 8 | | 640 | 2 AC | 337 | Josiah, age 8, rules 31 yrs, 2 Kgs 22:1; 2 Chron 34:1 |
| 9 | | 639 | 1 | 338 | |
| | | 638 | | | |

Figure 3.20 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|-----------------------|----|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Nabopolassar 21 years | 14 | | 634 | 6 | 343 | Birth of Johoiakim |
| | 15 | | 633 | 7 | 344 | |
| | 16 | | 632 | 8 | 345 | Josiah, age 15, begins to seek God, 2 Chron 34:3 |
| | 17 | | 631 | 9 | 346 | |
| | 18 | | 630 | 10 | 347 | Josiah, age 17, purges idolatry from Judah, 2 Chron 34:3-7 |
| | 19 | | 629 | 11 | 348 | |
| | 20 | | 628 | 12 | 349 | |
| | 21 | | 627 | 13 | 350 | Jeremiah called, 13th of Josiah, Jer 25:1-3 |
| | 22 | AC | 626 | 14 | 351 | Josiah purges Judah of Idols. |
| | 23 | 1 | 625 | 15 | 352 | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Figure 3.21 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|---|----|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 5th of Nabopolassar Lunar eclipse, April 22, 621 | 26 | 4 | 622 | 18 | 355 | Book of the Law read, Passover kept, altar at Bethel destroyed |
| | 27 | 5 | 621 | 19 | 356 | |
| | 28 | 6 | 620 | 20 | 357 | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.22 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|----------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| | 38 | 16 | 610 | 30 | 367 | |
| Necho's Egyptian army at Harran, 17th of Nabopolassar | Josiah, age 39 | 17 | 609 | 31 AC | 368 | Josiah, age 39, slain by Necho, (Jehoahaz 3 months, 2 Kgs 23:31)). Jehoiakim 11 years, 2 Kgs |
| | | 18 | 608 | 1 | 369 | |
| | | 19 | 607 | 2 | 370 | |
| | | 20 | 606 | 3 | 371 | |
| Nebuchadnezzar, 43 yrs. Battle of Carchemish in 4th year of Josiah | AC | 21 | 605 | 4 | 372 | Daniel deported in 3rd year of Jehoiakim, Dan 1:1-2 Jeremiah dictates the prophecy to Baruch in 4th year of Jehoiakim, Jer 36:1 |
| | [1] | | 604 | 5 | 373 | |
| Year [1] of Nebuch. = year 4 of Jehoiakim, Jer 25:1 | 1 [2] | | 603 | 6 | 374 | |
| | 2 [3] | | | | | |

Figure 3.23 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|-------|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Nebuchadnezzar 4th yr, Jehoiakim 8th year, <i>Joseph. Ant.</i> 10.6.1 [87] Nebuchad. Stays home and regroups his army Nebuchad. Sends out companies to scour for booty Jerusalem taken on Adar, (March 16, 597), 7th yr of Nebuchadnezzar | 4 [5] | | 601 | 8 | 376 | Death of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin 3 months, [exiled 37 yrs], 2 Kgs 24:8, Zedekiah 11 years Ezekiel, vision of God, July 1, 593, Ezek 1:1-2 Ezekiel with elders, Aug. 19, 595, Ezek 8:1 Elders rebuked, Aug. 12, 591, Ezek 20:1 |
| | 5 [6] | | 600 | 9 | 377 | |
| | 6 [7] | | 599 | 10 | 378 | |
| | 7 [8] | | 598 | 11 AC [1] | 379 | |
| | 8 | | 597 | 1 [2] | 380 | |
| | 9 | | 596 | 2 [3] | 381 | |
| | 10 | | 595 | 3 [4] | 382 | |
| | 11 | | 594 | 4 [5] | 383 | |
| | 12 | | 593 | 5 [6] | 384 | |
| | 13 | | 592 | 6 [7] | 385 | |
| | 14 | | 591 | 7 [8] | 386 | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Figure 3.24 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | Israel Tishri to Tishri Years | Julian Years, January to January | Judah Nisan to Nisan Years | Years of Division of the Kingdom | |
|--|----|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | 17 | | 588 | 10 [11] | 389 | Jeremiah imprisoned, 10th of Zedekiah, 18th of Nebuchad. Jer 32:1-2 Temple burned, 11th year of Zedekiah, 390th year of Kingdom, Kgs 25:8, 9 Exiles, after 6 months, hear that Jerusalem was taken, Dec. 19, 587, Ezek 33:21 |
| | 18 | | 587 | 11 [12] | 390 1 | |
| | 19 | | 586 | [13] yr of Jehoiachin's exile | 2 | |
| | 20 | | 585 | [14] | 3 | |
| | 21 | | 584 | [15] | 4 | |
| | | | | | | |

The Divided Monarchy Spread Sheet

Figure 3.25 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | | Julian Years, January to January | Years of Jehoiachin's Exile | Year of 70 years | |
|--|----|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| | 30 | | 575 | [24] | 13 | Ezekiel's vision, Nisan 10, year 25, 14th after city fell (Apr 8, 574) Ezek 40:1 |
| | 31 | | 574 | [25] | 14 | |
| | 32 | | 573 | [26] | 15 | |

Figure 3.26 — The Chronology of the Divided Kingdom, continued.

| | | | Julian Years, January to January | Years of Jehoiachin's Exile | Year of 70 years | |
|-----------------------|----|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Nebuchadnezzar | 42 | | 563 | [36] | 25 | Jehoiachin released after 37 Years in the accession year of Amel Marduk |
| Amel-Marduk, 2yrs. | 43 | ← | 562 | [37] | 26 | |
| | AC | | 561 | | 27 | |
| Nabunaid, 17 years | 1 | | 560 | | 28 | |
| | 2 | → | 559 | | 29 | |



APPENDIX 3

SIGNIFICANT DATES IN THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAH

THE FOLLOWING CHART RECAPS THE SIGNIFICANT DATES IN THE LAST DAYS OF the ancient kingdom of Judah which has been established in this study. Notice that the author has tied the dates established herein to the Julian Day system for reference, comparison, and verification, which is an innovation that none of the other major chronological studies mentioned herein *viz.*, Thiele, Malamat, Finegan, *etc.*, ever did. Thus, this study pioneers in this important added feature which can be verified for future researchers who wish to use it in their own studies.⁸¹⁰

Also, this study has had to make use of a Hebrew Calendar system that divorces itself from the modern day reconstructed Babylonian Calendar, — a modern creation of the scholars from Brown University, Parker and Dubberstein, since that system employs an intercalated second Ululu (Elul) which is out of compliance with the Mosaic calendar of Leviticus 23.

It is a sad testimony that modern scholars pay no attention to that important fact and use the Babylonian calendar blissfully (and indeed ignorantly) as if it somehow represents the ultimate standard in authoritative truth, just as they do with the false chronology of Edwin R. Thiele for the Kings of Judah and Israel, as well as the false chronologies of Egypt and Assyria. Their painful ignorance needs to be aggressively challenged hence forth.⁸¹¹

The calendar employed in this study was the calendar developed by Dr. Herman L. Hoeh as explained by him in the booklet *The Crucifixion Was not on Friday*.⁸¹² A full computer run-off was developed by John A. Kossey,⁸¹³ which employs the following rules.

⁸¹⁰ Future studies need to include Julian Days in their studies. What one needs to do is to create a spreadsheet that has columns for the day-by-day sequence of Julian calendar dates, reconstructed Babylonian dates, reconstructed Hebrew dates (based on the system used herein) juxtaposed with equivalent Julian Days. The author has created such a spreadsheet, but obviously could not reproduce it here in this volume.

Hebrew Calendar Basics

The primary features of the calendar used in this study are:

1. That the assumption that the Hebrew calendar was an adaptation of the ancient Babylonian calendar by the exiled Jews in Babylonian captivity is herein summarily rejected;
2. That the assumption that the Hebrew calendar was developed by some long, agonizing process by post-Temple Jewish rabbis, proceeded by a period of regulation by the observation of the new moon, until established in the ninth century of the common era, is herein rejected.

A fixed calendar was established In the Book of Leviticus, chapter 23, where we read:

The ETERNAL spoke to Moses, saying: “Speak to the children of Israel and say to them: The appointed feasts of the ETERNAL which you shall proclaim [are] holy convocations, my appointed feasts (Lev 23:1-2, translation the author’s).

Twice in this verse the term “appointed feasts” is used. The word “appointed” [Heb. *moed*] enshrines these annual feasts in a definite calendar system that leaves no room for doubt nor error as to when they were to occur. Who was to appoint these feasts and how? How could these “appointed feasts” be observed if Moses was not given instructions as to when to appoint those feasts? Pray tell, what does “appointed” mean? Understand that within this verse is something that goes unnoticed by everyone.

These annual festivals are those which the “Eternal” says are those “which YOU [Moses] shall proclaim” as holy convocations. What does that mean, “YOU shall proclaim?” Did you notice that the burden of when these festivals was to occur is squarely put on the authority of Moses to proclaim? How could he do this if there were not an accurate and established calendar system that was already in place that he could rely upon to fulfill such a requirement if there was no calendar system already in existence? And it was to Moses who was given the authority to proclaim when Holy Days were to occur. Consider the following:

And the time of dwelling [of the] sons of Israel, which they dwelt in Egypt [was] thirty year[s] and four hundred year[s].⁸¹⁴ And it came to pass at the end of thirty year[s] and four hundred year[s], and it came to pass in the selfsame day [*b’etzem ha-yom ha-zeh*], they went out (Exod 12:40-41, translation the author’s).

How was it even possible for Moses to claim that after a period of 430 years, *to the very day*, that the children of Israel departed from Egypt? Obviously, the “selfsame day” spoken of here refers back to a date in history — the very day that Abraham was to offer his son Isaac and confirm the covenant. Based upon this fact alone, how can anyone deny that a definite calendar system was

⁸¹¹ Gershon Galil insightfully notes here: “All the scholars assume that the Babylonian calendar corresponded to the Judahite, and that 2 Adar in the seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar —a date undoubtedly given in the Babylonian chronicle according to the Babylonian calendar—fell on 2 Adar according to the calendar of Judah. But it can be positively established that there is no proof for the presumed correspondence between the calendars. To the contrary, since there was no fixed intercalation of years in Babylonia ..., it is certainly possible that at times the calendars diverged. ... in the seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar the possibility of divergence was more probable than the possibility that the calendars corresponded, ...” (*Chronology*, 113).

⁸¹² See online at http://www.cog-ff.com/The_Crucifixion_Was_Not_On_Friday.pdf?msclid=9a2802a5a66a11ecaf19b8aa8e074f39.

⁸¹³ John A. Kossey, *The Hebrew Calendar: A Mathematical Introduction* (Pasadena: Ambassador College Press, 1974).

⁸¹⁴ The Septuagint has: “The sojourning of the children and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt.”

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not in use at that time in order to calculate such a date? Indeed, if Moses could back calculate to the very day that Abraham confirmed the covenant, does this not represent a calendar system in place that he could make such a calculation?

This means that in the year that the Israelites left Egypt on Nisan 15, 1493 BCE means that its equivalent date on the retro-calculated Julian calendar was Wednesday, April 3, 1493 BCE [JD 1176 498].⁸¹⁵ 430 years earlier places Nisan 15 on Thursday, April 17, 1923 BCE [JD 1019 154],⁸¹⁶ which is when Abraham bound his son on the *mitzbeyach* (altar), and the confirmation of the covenant occurred. Yes, to the very day, as Moses said. What was his means of calculation that he could pin-point a particular day in history after a period of four centuries?

The day of Nisan 15 has been illustrious throughout Jewish history and has been memorialized from the records and traditions passed down throughout time based upon a specific calendar system. For instance the *Seder Olam* tells us:

This happened at the time of Pesah and one fixed it on the 15th of Nisan. On the same day the following year did the Children of Israel leave Egypt. Similarly, on the 15th of Nisan was our father Abraham talked to between the Pieces. On the 15th of Nisan, the angels came to Abraham to announce [the birth of Isaac] and on the same day the following year was Isaac born as it says (*Gen 18:14*): “At that time I shall return to you in the time for life and Sarah will have a son.” On the 15th of Nisan, Israel left Egypt as it is said (*Ex. 12:41*): “It was at the end of 430 years to the day that the hosts of the Eternal left the Land of Egypt,” there is one term of all [of these occurrences]. On that 14th of Nisan, Israel were slaughtering their Passover sacrifices in Egypt; in that night the firstborn were smitten.⁸¹⁷

The ancient Israelites could not have tracked all these dates from the past without a specific set calendar in place. Yet, for modern scholars, the idea that a calculated Hebrew Calendar going back to the time of Moses is without saying, totally preposterous. But what is really preposterous is any notion that the ancient Hebrews did not have a calendar system in place that could track such events.

Moses spoke of a calendar system that was already in existence in his day and an established institution. He could not have instituted a Holyday system that designated certain days of the calendar being “Holy” without an established calendar already in place. How would a general populace know what day would be “Holy” without a method to predict when such days would occur?

In the very beginning of the Word of God we are confronted with:

God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate day from night; they shall serve as signs for the set times (l’odot ul’mo’adim) — the days and the years.” (*Gen 1:14, JPS*).

How clear it is from the very beginning of Biblical revelation that the very purpose for the heavenly bodies were to determine “set times”, *i.e.*, “appointed times” for “days” and “years.” What appointed times?

⁸¹⁵ The tradition of the *Seder Olam* 1:5 “Thornbush to Sinai” (Guggenheimer, 60) is that Nisan 15 at the time of the Exodus was a Friday. In the year of 1493 BCE, however, Nisan 15 fell on a Wednesday. Nevertheless, the point is that the Jews could not have come up with such a tradition without being able to retro-calculate upon a fixed calendar.

⁸¹⁶ Without dealing with molad time but just in calendar day time, the difference calculated by this author in Julian Days is 157,044 days, which divided by the number of days in a solar year (365.2422...) yields 429 years, 355 days, 2 hours, 19 minutes, and 16 seconds. Since a lunar year on the average is 354 years, then the overflow of 355 days represents an additional year to be added to the 429 years and rounded off to 430 lunar years coinciding exactly with 430 solar years.

⁸¹⁷ *Seder Olam* 1:5 “Thornbush to Sinai” (Guggenheimer, 58).

These are My fixed times (mo'adai YHVH), the fixed times of the LORD, which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions (Lev 23:2, *JPS*).

There it is! Moses puts it all together by saying “fixed times.” Fixed times can only mean an established calendar, and nothing less. All down through the Hebrew Scriptures we are given exact dates recorded based on a fixed calendar. There is never any mention throughout the TaNaK on a calendar system that was based on an observation method.

The calendar was not just for predicting future events, but used to track past events as well. Notice this important revelation.

And the time of dwelling [of the] sons of Israel, which they dwelt in Egypt [was] thirty year[s] and four hundred year[s].⁸¹⁸ And it came to pass at the end of thirty year[s] and four hundred year[s], and it came to pass in the selfsame day [*b'etzem ha-yom ha-zeh*], they went out (Exod 12:40-41, translation the author's).

When God told Moses that “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months” (Exod 12:2), He was in fact establishing a new calendar system in which seven annual Holy Days could only occur.⁸¹⁹ Indeed, it was now an entirely new calendar system specifically established and designed for one sole purpose, *viz.*, Holy Day observance:

It is thus very interesting that the first commandment given to the Hebrew people on the even of the Exodus from Egypt referred to calendrical reform (Exodus 12:2).⁸²⁰

And finally, at the very end of the Hebrew Scriptures, in the days of Nehemiah, we read:

When the seventh month arrived — the Israelites being [settled] in their towns — the entire people assembled as one man in the square before the Watergate ... Nehemiah the Tirshatha, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were explaining to the people said to all the people, “THIS DAY IS HOLY TO THE LORD YOUR GOD ... (Neh 8:1, 9, *JPS*, emphasis the author's).

These verses tell us that the seventh month was foreseen and anticipated according Exodus 23:23-25. On the arrival of the seventh month counting from Nisan we have the day of Trumpets, an annual Holyday. Then Nehemiah stood up before the crowd and proclaimed that “This day is holy to the LORD your God.”

The Jewish authorities and the entire population certainly knew beforehand when Tishri 1 was to occur. In any society a fixed calendar is essential for doing business and planning events, especially Holidays.

⁸¹⁸ The Septuagint has: “The sojourning of the children and of their fathers, which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in the land of Egypt.”

⁸¹⁹ Seven annual holy days were established to occur only within the growing agricultural season of the year. They reveal the step-by-step plan of God. The Winter season was excluded from being a part of that plan of spiritual growth and harvest. No annual Holyday of Leviticus 23 was to occur within the dead of Winter. Modern Jews have added post-Biblical celebrations, such as Hanukkah and Purim, that people may think are Holydays, but are merely national days of remembrance like the fourth of July, and nothing more.

⁸²⁰ Shlomo Sternberg, “Introduction” to Solomon Gandz, *Studies in Hebrew Astronomy and Mathematics* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1970), xiv.

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The Hebrew Scriptures from one end to the other give explicit dates for many specific events.⁸²¹ And in no case throughout the four thousand year history of the Israelite people is there any hint that their calendar was regulated by the practice of observation.

Visual observation alone could never have regulated the calendar satisfactorily, if only because visibility of the new crescent in “proper time” might be forestalled for many months by adverse weather conditions or the like. **Saadia, indeed, went so far as to suggest that visual observation never did regulate the calendar and that the fixed calendar, which does not depend on observation and visibility, goes back to Moses if not even to Adam.** In the eyes of [the talmudic scholar] Maimonides, however, such a view amounted to flagrant rejection of the Oral Law ...”⁸²²

The reason Maimonides rejected the fixed calendar going back to Moses is that the Talmud speaks of visual observation by witnesses and Maimonides. Since he, being a strict Talmudist, could not allow himself to take on Saadia Gaon’s strong view. Therefore, he also was forced to concede (in order to defend the Talmud):

Actually, however, the court followed a tradition transmitted by the Sages from one generation to another **on the authority of Moses**, our teacher ... **on the basis of calculation.**⁸²³

So Maimonides himself, like Saadia Gaon, in the end had to confess that throughout all generations since Moses the Calendar was regulated “on the basis of calculation.” Such an amazing admission by Maimonides is a contradiction to his own teaching. The fact of the matter is that Maimonides was forced to admit that in cases of extended cloud cover, the Sanhedrin always had the back-up position of declaring the New Moon “on the basis calculation.” Notice another remarkable statement by Maimonides:

Even at the time when observation was the basis (for determining the recurrence of the New Moon Day), **the court used to ascertain by calculation**, and with great precision, according to the methods of the astronomers, the exact time of the (true) conjunction of the moon with the sun, in order to find out whether the moon could be visible (on the night of the 30th day) or not. The first step in this calculation is the operation by which one ascertains, only approximately and without precision—on the basis of the mean motion of the sun and the moon—their mean conjunction, which is called molad.⁸²⁴

If the Court could “ascertain by calculation ... with great precision” the new moon conjunction, then obviously, the entire observation and sanctification of the new moon process was strictly ceremonial in nature, and nothing more than that. This is why today honest Rabbis are forced to confess that the Sanhedrin had the means of calculating the calendar in a tradition that stretched back to even Moses himself:

⁸²¹ Consider also the numerous historical dates recorded in Solomon Zeitlin, *Megillat Taanit as a Source for Jewish Chronology and History in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922).

⁸²² Julian Obermann, “Introduction,” *The Code of Maimonides*, lvii (author’s emphasis). Please follow all the footnotes of this important work. Notice the contradiction to say that the “secret of calendar” regulation was a flagrant rejection of the oral Law, when in fact, the “Sod ha-Ibbur,” “the secret of intercalation,” was nothing short of an oral law in itself. Yet, the point that the Talmud tradition talked about calendar regulation by observation rather than a fixed calendar is why the Rabbi’s were conflicted with the practice of calculation.

⁸²³ Maimonides Moses, “Sanctification of the New Moon.” In Yale Judaica series, vol. II. *The Code of Maimonides, Book 3, Treatise 8*, tr. Solomon Gandz, Introduction by Julian Obermann, *Astronomical Commentary* by Otto Neugebauer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), 76.

⁸²⁴ Maimonides, *Sanctification*, 6:1 (26-7).

The calculation of the precise moment of the appearance of the new moon was transmitted to the sages in an unbroken tradition that goes back to Sinai. It was called *sod ha'ibur*, principle of intercalation (*Rosh Hashanah* 20b). Although the exact time of its re-emergence was known, the new moon was sanctified by the *Bet Din* in Jerusalem on the testimony of two witnesses who had sighted its appearance. In fact, a large part of tractate *Rosh Hashanah* is devoted to the subject of *Kiddush Hachodesh*, “sanctification of the month.”⁸²⁵

Rabbi Finkel brings out several important points here. Modern day Jews know that even in spite of the fact that the Talmud discusses observational methods, they also have to admit to the fact that the Jewish sages well knew in advance when the New Moon would occur based upon calculation. So, as Rabbi Finkel here admits, “although the exact time of its re-emergence was known” (which is certainly a candid admission that makes observation totally superfluous), they still went along with the ceremonial procedure of questioning two witnesses, *etc.* Nevertheless, the questioning of witnesses was merely an empty ceremony. Why? Because if the “Sages” already knew when the New Moon would occur based on calculation, then why would they question witnesses as to whether they had seen the new moon crescent?

Rabbi Finkel further stated here that “the calculation of the precise moment of the appearance of the new moon was transmitted to the sages in an unbroken tradition that goes back to Sinai.” Again, such a statement is contradictory to the observation method for calendar regulation.⁸²⁶

One thing, however, is certain. There is no Biblical evidence that Moses, or anyone else throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, ever questioned witnesses to determine the New Moon day. Indeed, the lack of any such discussion speaks loudly to the contrary and further reinforces the idea that such a procedure never existed in the annals of ancient Israel and Judah. The Hebrew Calendar of Dr. Hoeh also accepts three of the four rules of postponement, for years prior to 142 CE, the fourth being a late addition.

It is not necessary to go over the rules of Hebrew calendar here, which the author intends to deal with in a separate volume.⁸²⁷ The point of this appendix is to declare that the Babylonian Calendar should not be used to determine dates in the last days of the Kingdom of Judah. This author has adopted a calendar system that was created by Dr. Hoeh in the 1970’s and whatever flaws it might have, is preferred over any reconstructed Babylonian calendar date accepted by scholars today.⁸²⁸

A Day to Remember — A Day with Dr. Hoeh

It was in the year of 1974 that I and my family had the privilege of spending the Feast of Tabernacles at Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, as guests of Dr. and Mrs. Richard Paige. Although I had met Dr. Herman L. Hoeh briefly on other occasions throughout the years, here I

⁸²⁵ Avraham Yaakov Finkel, *The Essence of the Holy Days* (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson Inc., 1993), 212.

⁸²⁶ There is a sense that the rabbis and Maimonides himself struggled with trying to juggle these two contradictory concepts.

⁸²⁷ This appendix was written after the completion of the main book. Many of the things discussed herein had been earlier stated on page 66.

⁸²⁸ When this author began this project Dr. Hoeh’s calendar seemed to be the right choice. Now, some serious reservations about that choice exist. Nevertheless, this project must go on as is and not be impeded. Any corrections must be put off for a future volume. Further study is needed in this area, which requires far more time than is at the disposal of the author. In this regard, consider the curious fact that in the year of 1493 BCE an eclipse of the moon occurred April 3 (JD 176 198), which by an alternate calculation than Dr. Hoeh’s would be Nisan 15. Dr. Hoeh’s calculation for Nisan 15 that year is May 2, which is inordinately too late in the Spring season and would also place the day of Trumpets on October 12 and the Great Last Day on November 2, again a month too late for keeping these Holidays in their proper season.

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finally had the chance to meet with him and his family at his home in La Cañada, California, and go over notes that I had corresponded with him in the past.⁸²⁹ He had bought a second house there just to house his personal library, which was amazing. Every room in that house was filled with books. He brought me to the administration building and gave me a tour of the facility. There, he introduced me to the programmer John Kossey, who provided me with a print-out of the calendar that I have used for this study. On the next page is a scanned image from one of the pages of that print-out that I still have to this day. The day ended at Dr. Hoeh's favorite Turkish restaurant in Pasadena.

Another tool that I have used online as a check for Julian Days is the Convert-a-Date website at <https://calendarhome.com/calculate/convert-a-date>. This site provides the weekday for any specific Julian Day in the past. However, the "Hebrew Date" shown will be incorrect most of the time, since it represents the retro-calculated present day Hebrew calendar date, as well as the Seder Olam year, which is historically off by some 240 years.

Table 28 therefore represents the results of determining dates of the Last Days of Judah based on the recalculated Hebrew calendar for ancient Judah which, for now, is the best attempt to comply with the Mosaic rules of calendar regulation given in Leviticus 23.

⁸²⁹ It was I who had initially suggested to Dr. Hoeh that ancient Judah had used a Spring-to-Spring calendar, which he eventually accepted in his treatise, "When Did Nebuchadrezzar Conquer Jerusalem?" Paper delivered at Ambassador College, Pasadena, Calif., 1976, at a Symposium entitled: "Frontiers of Knowledge." I also presented him with a perfect 1728 edition of Isaac Newton's *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* (I wonder where that book ended up).

Figure 4. Scanned Image of a Page from John Kossey's Hebrew Calendar Printout.

| YEAR | PASS | UNL BR | UNL BR | PENT | MOLAD | YR/ CYC DAYS | JULIAN DAY | TRUMP | ATONE |
|--------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 588 BC | APR 18 MON | APR 19 TUES | APR 25 MON | JUNE 13 MON | SEPT 27 3 209 TUES RULE 3 | 1 354 | 1506 928 | SEPT 29 THUR | OCT 8 SAB |
| 587 BC | APR 7 FRI | APR 8 SAB | APR 14 FRI | MAY 29 MON | SEPT 16 12 5 SAB RULE 1 2 | 2 383 | 1507 282 | SEPT 18 MON | SEPT 27 WED |
| 586 BC | APR 25 WED | APR 26 THUR | MAY 2 WED | JUNE 18 MON | OCT 5 9 594 FRI RULE 2 | 3 355 | 1507 665 | OCT 6 SAB | OCT 15 MON |
| 585 BC | APR 14 MON | APR 15 TUES | APR 21 MON | JUNE 9 MON | SEPT 23 18 390 TUES RULE 1 2 | 4 354 | 1508 020 | SEPT 25 THUR | OCT 4 SAB |
| 584 BC | APR 3 FRI | APR 4 SAB | APR 10 FRI | MAY 25 MON | SEPT 13 3 186 SUN RULE 2 | 5 383 | 1508 374 | SEPT 14 MON | SEPT 23 WED |
| 583 BC | APR 21 WED | APR 22 THUR | APR 28 WED | JUNE 14 MON | OCT 2 0 775 SAB | 6 355 | 1508 757 | OCT 2 SAB | OCT 11 MON |
| 582 BC | APR 11 MON | APR 12 TUES | APR 18 MON | JUNE 6 MON | SEPT 21 9 571 WED RULE 2 | 7 385 | 1509 112 | SEPT 22 THUR | OCT 1 SAB |
| 581 BC | APR 30 MON | MAY 1 TUES | MAY 7 MON | JUNE 25 MON | OCT 9 7 80 TUES RULE 3 | 8 354 | 1509 497 | OCT 11 THUR | OCT 20 SAB |
| 580 BC | APR 19 FRI | APR 20 SAB | APR 26 FRI | JUNE 10 MON | SEPT 28 15 956 SAB RULE 1 2 | 9 353 | 1509 851 | SEPT 30 MON | OCT 9 WED |
| 579 BC | APR 7 MON | APR 8 TUES | APR 14 MON | JUNE 2 MON | SEPT 18 0 752 THUR | 10 385 | 1510 204 | SEPT 18 THUR | SEPT 27 SAB |
| 578 BC | APR 27 MON | APR 28 TUES | MAY 4 MON | JUNE 22 MON | OCT 6 22 261 TUES RULE 1 2 | 11 354 | 1510 589 | OCT 8 THUR | OCT 17 SAB |
| 577 BC | APR 15 FRI | APR 16 SAB | APR 22 FRI | JUNE 6 MON | SEPT 25 7 57 SUN RULE 2 | 12 355 | 1510 943 | SEPT 26 MON | OCT 5 WED |
| 576 BC | APR 5 WED | APR 6 THUR | APR 12 WED | MAY 29 MON | SEPT 14 15 933 THUR RULE 1 2 | 13 383 | 1511 298 | SEPT 16 SAB | SEPT 25 MON |
| 575 BC | APR 23 MON | APR 24 TUES | APR 30 MON | JUNE 18 MON | OCT 3 13 442 WED RULE 1 | 14 354 | 1511 681 | OCT 4 THUR | OCT 13 SAB |
| 574 BC | APR 12 FRI | APR 13 SAB | APR 19 FRI | JUNE 3 MON | SEPT 22 22 238 SUN RULE 1 | 15 355 | 1512 035 | SEPT 23 MON | OCT 2 WED |
| 573 BC | APR 1 WED | APR 2 THUR | APR 8 WED | MAY 25 MON | SEPT 11 7 34 FRI RULE 2 | 16 383 | 1512 390 | SEPT 12 SAB | SEPT 21 MON |
| 572 BC | APR 19 MON | APR 20 TUES | APR 26 MON | JUNE 14 MON | SEPT 30 4 623 THUR | 17 355 | 1512 773 | SEPT 30 THUR | OCT 9 SAB |

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Table 28:

| Pages Cited | Event | Sources | Julian Day | Year BCE | Date | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | | | | | Julian | Hebrew | Babylonian | Week Day |
| 106 | First day of Nisan, 598, Hebrew calendar | | 1503 087 | 598 | Mar 25 | Nisan 1 | <i>Addaru 29</i> | Sabbath |
| <i>106</i> | <i>First day of Nisan, 599, Babylonian calendar</i> | | <i>1503 089</i> | <i>598</i> | <i>Mar 27</i> | <i>Nisan 3</i> | <i>Nisanu 1</i> | <i>Monday</i> |
| 103, 105, 119, 123, 131 | Jehoiakim killed, Jehoiachin installed; Ezekiel exiled (Second Exile)^a | Jewish Tradition (as cited) | 1503 326 | 598 | Nov 19 | Kislev 3 | <i>Arah-samnu 1</i> | Sunday |
| <i>66</i> | <i>Hypothetical date for the First fall of Jerusalem in first Adar, 597</i> | | <i>1503 413</i> | <i>597</i> | <i>Feb 14</i> | <i>Adar 2</i> | <i>Tebet 30</i> | <i>Wednesday</i> |
| <i>66, 105</i> | <i>Hypothetical date for the First fall of Jerusalem in second Adar, 597</i> | <i>BM 21946 (Hypothetical)</i> | <i>1503 443</i> | <i>597</i> | <i>Mar 15</i> | <i>Veadar 2</i> | <i>Addaru 1</i> | <i>Friday</i> |
| <i>66, 105, 120, 131</i> | First fall of Jerusalem, Jehoiachin exiled | BM 21946 | 1503 444 | 597 | Mar 16 | <i>Veadar 3</i> | Addaru 2 | Sabbath |
| <i>120, 131</i> | Beginning year 1 of Zedekiah | (no citation) | 1503 472 | 597 | Apr 13 | Nisan 1 | <i>Nisanu 1</i> | Sabbath |
| <i>121, 123, 131</i> | Jehoiachin exiled (third exile) | Ezek 40:1 | 1503 481 | 597 | Apr 22 | Nisan 10 | <i>Nisanu 10</i> | Monday |
| <i>126</i> | Ezekiel's initial vision | Ezek 1:1 | 1505 012 | 593 | July 1 | Tammuz 5 | <i>Simanu 5</i> | Sabbath |

⁸³⁰ Text in bold are the dates established in this study and therefore should supersede all other published dates of the past. Dates shown in italics are no longer applicable for historical purposes; they are provided here for reference only, since they are either based on 1) the erroneous date for the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem for the year of 586 BCE; 2) dates derived from the modern reconstruction of the Babylonian Calendar (unless they happen to coincide with the dates of this study), or 3) dates based on a Fall-to-Fall calendar for ancient Judah, which has been proven herein to be an erroneous premise in this study. Boxes with bold borders represent dates from the sources cited.

Table 28:

| Pages Cited | Event | Sources | Julian Day | Year BCE | Date | | | |
|---------------|--|---|------------|----------|---------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | | | | | Julian | Hebrew | Babylonian | Week Day |
| 126 | Ezekiel's second vision | Ezek 3:16-7:27 | 1505 019 | 593 | July 8 | Tammuz 12 | <i>Simamu 12</i> | Sabbath |
| 126 | Ezekiel's third vision | Ezek 8:1-19:14 | 1505 426 | 592 | Aug 19 | Elul 5 | <i>Abu 5</i> | Sunday |
| 126 | Elders inquire | Ezek 20:1-23:49 | 1505 784 | 591 | Aug 12 | Ab 10 | <i>Abu 8</i> | Monday |
| 114, 126, 132 | Beginning of Final Siege of Jerusalem in 587 (Hebrew date) ^b | 2 Kgs 25:1; Jer 39:1; 52:12-13; Ezek 24:1-2 | 1506 672 | 588 | Jan 16 | Tebeth 10 | <i>Tebet 11</i> | Sunday |
| 126 | Judgment against Egypt | Ezek 29:1-16 | 1507 028 | 587 | Jan 7 | Tebeth 12 | <i>Tebet 12</i> | Sabbath |
| 126, 131 | Beginning of Zedekiah's year 11; Judgment against Tyre | Ezek 26:1 | 1507 105 | 587 | Mar 25 | (Nisan 1?) ^c | <i>Addaru-1 30</i> | Sabbath |
| 126 | Judgment against Egypt | Ezek 30:20-26 | 1507 111 | 587 | Mar 31 | Nisan 7 | <i>Addaru-2 6</i> | Friday |
| 126 | Judgment against Egypt | Ezek 31:1-18 | 1507 164 | 587 | May 23 | Sivan 1 | <i>Aiaru 1</i> | Sunday |
| 67, 132 | Breach of walls, Zedekiah captured | 2 Kgs 25:8, Jer 39:2, Jer 52:5 | 1507 202 | 587 | June 30 | Tammuz 9 | <i>Simanu 10</i> | Friday |
| 67 | <i>Hypothetical date for the breach of walls, based on the false Babylonian date of Duz 9, 586</i> | | 1507 585 | 586 | July 18 | Tammuz 9 | <i>Duz 9</i> | <i>Wednesday</i> |
| 132 | Nebuzaradan enters Jerusalem | 2 Kgs 25:8 | 150 7229 | 587 | July 27 | Ab 7 | <i>Duzu 7</i> | Thursday |

Significant Dates in the Last Days of Judah

Table 28:

| Pages Cited | Event | Sources | Julian Day | Year BCE | Date | | | |
|--------------|--|--|--------------------|------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | | | | | Julian | Hebrew | Babylonian | Week Day |
| 67, 121, 132 | Temple destroyed | 2 Kgs 25:9-19; 2 Chr 36:18-19; Jer 52:12-25 | 1507 232 | 587 | July 30 | Ab 10 | <i>Duzu 10</i> | Sunday |
| 67, 121 | <i>Temple destroyed based on Hypothetical Babylonian date of Abu 10, 587</i> | | <i>1507 261</i> | <i>587</i> | <i>Aug 28</i> | <i>Elul 9</i> | <i>Abu 10</i> | <i>Monday</i> |
| 126 | Arrival of escapee | Ezek 33:21 | 1507 374 | 587 | Dec 19 | Tebeth 5 | <i>Kislamu 4</i> | Tuesday |
| 131 | Ending of Zedekiah's year 11 | | 1507 487 | 587 | April 11 | Veadar 29 | Addaru 27 | Wednesday |
| 67 | <i>Temple destroyed on erroneous Hebrew date of Ab 9/10 and the Babylonian date of Abu 9/10, 586</i> | <i>Jer 52:12</i> | <i>1507 614/15</i> | <i>586</i> | <i>Aug 16/17</i> | <i>Ab 9/10</i> | <i>Abu 9/10</i> | <i>Friday/Sabbath</i> |
| 126 | Dirge concerning Pharaoh | Ezek 32:1-16 | 1507 814 | 585 | Mar 3 | Adar 1 | <i>Adarru 1</i> | Monday |
| 126 | Against Pharaoh continued | Ezek 32:17-33:20 | 1507 828 | 585 | Mar 17 | Adar 15 | <i>Adarru 15</i> | Monday |
| 126 | Vision of Temple | 40:1-48:35 | 1512 222 | 573 | Mar 28 | Nisan 10 | <i>Adarru 9</i> | Sabbath |
| 108 | Last dated text of Nebuchadnezzar; First dated text of Amelmarduk | See references in Parker & Dubberstein, 12 | 151 6433 | 562 | Oct 8 | <i>Elul 27</i> | Ululu 26 | Wednesday |

a. The first exile occurred in the third year of Jehoiakim 607/606 BCE, when the young prince Daniel and his colleagues were sent to the court of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 1:3-4). See page 119.

b. "During the course of the siege, the Egyptian army moved north to the aid of Judah, the Babylonians were forced to lift the siege and concentrate their army for the decisive battle against the Egyptians (Jer 37:5). The Egyptian army was defeated, however, and the Babylonians renewed the siege of Jerusalem," Gershon Galil, *Chronology*, 118.

c. The text reads: “In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month ...” Unfortunately, the month number is lacking in the MT text. Werner’s Commentary states: “The date, however, is incomplete. Although the first of the month is mentioned, the month is not specified. In the Septuagint, there also is no reference to the month. Manuscript evidence from the Septuagint varies respecting the year. There are manuscripts that agree with the reading of the Masoretic Text, but the oldest extant Greek text (p967) says the “tenth year” and Codex Alexandrinus says the “twelfth year” (<https://wernerbiblecommentary.org/?q=node%2f918&mssclid=0e17615fae1611eca7e72cbfdd4e9bfc>, accessed on March 27, 2022). Apparently, Freedy and Redford agreed that the year should follow p967 and change the MT reading from 11 to 10, but without any comment that they had done such (Freedy and Redford, “Dates in Ezekiel,” 468). Is the reader keeping up with these shenanigans?



APPENDIX 4

WAS THE SUMERIAN “UR” THE ORIGINAL HOME OF ABRAHAM?

*I*N THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES WE ARE INFORMED THAT THE CITY OF THE HOMELAND OF the Biblical Avram (later “Abraham”) was referred to as “Ur of the Chaldees.”⁸³¹ So, the question is “where is Ur of the Chaldees?”

What Are the Biblical Texts?

First, let us look at the Biblical texts that make reference to Ur of the Chaldees:

These then are the generations of Terah: Terah begot Avram, Nahor, and Haran; afterwards Haran begot Lot. Thereupon Haran died before the face of his father, Terah, in the land of his birthplace, in **Ur of the Chaldees** (Heb. *’ur kasdim*) (Gen 11:27-28).

Then Terah took Avram his son and Lot, the son of Haran, the son of his son, and Sorai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Avram his son; and they went out with them from **Ur of the Chaldees**, heading for the land of Canaan, but coming as far as Harran, and they [then decided to] settle there (Gen 11:31).

I am the Eternal who brought you forth from **Ur of the Chaldees** (*’ur kasdim*) to give to you this land [*i.e.*, Canaan] to inherit it (Gen 15:7).

Even as late as the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in the mid-fifth century BCE the phrase “Ur of the Chaldees” continued to be used:

⁸³¹ Masoretic Text: אֹר כַּשְׁדִּים, *’ūr Kasdīm*; Gr. χωρα (τῶν) Χαλδαίων, (country of the Chaldeans).

You being the Eternal, the God who chose Avram, who brought him out of **Ur of the Chaldees**; you changed his name to Avraham (Neh 9:7).

In the New Testament Stephen, the first martyr in the apostolic church, does not mention the word “Ur” but rather simply states “the country of the Chaldeans”:

Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in **Mesopotamia**, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, ‘Leave your country and your relatives and go to the land that I will show you.’ Then he left **the country of the Chaldeans** and settled in Haran. ... (Acts 7:2-4, NRSV, emphasis the author’s).⁸³²

Consider the fact that the phrase “Ur of the Chaldees” is a phrase originally occurring in the Hebrew Masoretic Text. Following these texts, it is also found in other ancient Hebrew literature, such as the *Book of Jubilees*,⁸³³ *The Sibylline Oracles*,⁸³⁴ and Josephus.⁸³⁵ The Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint or LXX, simply renders these same Biblical texts “land” or “country” of the Chaldees” — the word “Ur” not occurring.

The Majority Opinion of Modern Scholars

For years people have assumed that Ur of the Chaldees was the ancient city in present day Iraq identified today by modern scholars as “Tell el-Muqayyar.”⁸³⁶ This cite was extensively excavated by Sir Leonard Woolley in the 1920’s and his identification with that city as being the Ur of Abraham generally became the new accepted opinion among scholars. Gary Rendsburg notes:

The identification of the birthplace of Abraham with Ur of Sumer in southern Iraq is standard teaching, present in almost all introductory textbooks of the Bible and the ancient Near East. Even the Vatican made this assumption when Pope John Paul II visited Ur in southern Iraq, believe it to be the birthplace of Abraham.⁸³⁷

Thus we read in the most prestigious and scholarly Bible Dictionary of our times, the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, under the article “Ur”:

After Babylon, it [Ur] is without a doubt the best known Mesopotamian site in the Bible because it is mentioned in connection with Abraham. According to Gen 11:31 it is from the city of Ur in Chaldea that Terah and his clan left to go to Haran, a great caravan site located in the belt of the Euphrates in N Syria.⁸³⁸

What is striking here to note is that throughout this entire scholarly article there is no hint of any controversy concerning where the Biblical Ur was located. It starts with the premise that the Sumerian Ur is the homeland of Abraham and moves forward from that point without so much as a mention of any controversy on the subject. Was this an oversight or was it a deliberate statement that now there is no longer a debate about the identification of where the ancient city of Abraham lie (at least within the now majority of the scholarly community)?

⁸³² In the New Testament, the martyr Stephen interestingly used the phrase not found in the Hebrew Masoretic text (Ur Kasdeem), but rather used the form found in the Greek Septuagint text “Land of the Chaldeans”.

⁸³³ *Book of Jubilees* 11:7-8; 12:14, 15, 21; 13:7; 14:7; 22:27.

⁸³⁴ *Sibylline Oracles* 3:218.

⁸³⁵ Josephus, *Ant.*, 1.6.5 [§151] (Whiston, 37).

⁸³⁶ See online at <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ur> (accessed Dec 28, 2022).

⁸³⁷ Gary Rendsburg, “Ur Kasdim: Where Is Abraham’s Birthplace.” Online article at <https://www.thetorah.com/article/ur-kasdim-where-is-abrahams-birthplace>.

⁸³⁸ Jean-Cl. Margueron, “Ur” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. by David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6:766.

Was the Sumerian “Ur” the Original Home of Abraham?

Once again, in the same dictionary, under the article of “Abraham” we are confronted with the following:

Abraham is portrayed as a member of a family associated with city life in Southern Babylonia, moving to Haran in Upper Mesopotamia en route to Canaan (Gen 11:31).⁸³⁹

Still further, in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, under the article concerning the city of Haran, we have a hint of a possible debate about the location of Abraham’s Ur:

There is no positive evidence for defining the time of the earlier migration from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran. Moreover, the Chaldeans during the patriarchal periods seem to be rather nomadic raiders (Job 1:17) who lived near Haran or Edom; so the traditional site of Ur in S Mesopotamia may be reexamined as some seek the location near Haran; but the place is not identified yet.⁸⁴⁰

Further examples of Ur being a southern Mesopotamian city are expressed by leading specialists in the field of Mesopotamian studies, such as Georges Roux:

We have already seen that Abraham and his family came from Ur in Sumer to Hebron in Canaan ...⁸⁴¹

Roux never mentions any debate, but merely assumes that the southern Mesopotamian Ur is the Biblical Ur and therefore, a settled matter. In other words the motif seems to be that nothing more needs to be addressed here, so let us move on.

Another famous Sumerian specialist, Samuel Noah Kramer, informs us:

Most scholars agree that while the Abraham saga as told in the Bible contains much that is legendary and fanciful, it does have an important kernel of truth, including Abraham’s birth in Ur of the Chaldees, perhaps about 1700 B.C., and his early life there with his family. Now **Ur was one of the most important cities of ancient Sumer**; in fact, it was the capital of Sumer at three different periods in its history. ... Abraham and his forefathers may well have had some acquaintance with Sumerian literary products that had been copied or created in their home town academy. And it is by no means impossible that he and the members of his family brought some of the Sumerian lore and learning with them to Palestine, where they gradually became part of the traditions and sources utilized by the Hebrew men of letters in composing and redacting the books of the Bible.⁸⁴²

The scholar Alan R. Millard now begins to slightly hint that there is a problem of identification:

Clearly someone thought it necessary to define Ur as “of the Chaldees” in the Genesis text. ... If we suppose that the Genesis text has a much earlier origin, then “of the Chaldees” could be an explanation added to the text at a time when the location of Ur needed to be clarified. The phrase may not be part of a tradition reaching back to Abraham’s time, but the information it preserves — namely, that Abraham came from Babylonia — could be part of the ancient tradition.⁸⁴³

The *Oxford Companion to the Bible* at least informs us that the southern Mesopotamian Ur is not exclusively accepted by modern scholars as the Ur of the Chaldees:

⁸³⁹ Alan R. Millard, “Abraham,” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. by David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 1:35.

⁸⁴⁰ Yoshitaka Kobayashi, “Haran” in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. by David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992): 3:58.

⁸⁴¹ Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, 268.

⁸⁴² Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 292 (emphasis the author’s).

⁸⁴³ Alan R. Millard, “Where Was Abraham’s Ur? The Case for the Babylonian City,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 27:3 (May/June 2001): 57.

The identification of “Ur of the Chaldees” with Tell el-Muqayyar is not universally accepted. Some scholars have suggested that it is Urfa (Edessa), while others have proposed a connection with a city named Ura.⁸⁴⁴

Werner Keller, in his electrifying book, *The Bible as History*, also opens up the door that other areas were beginning to be considered by scholars. He begins with the exploits of the adventurous archaeologist by the name of Leonard Woolley, who first excavated Ur, and relates:

Under the red slopes of tell al Muqayyar lay a whole city, bathed in the bright sunshine, awakened from its long sleep after many thousand years by the patient burrowing of the archaeologists. Woolley and his companions [among them Cyrus H. Gordon] were beside themselves with joy. For before them lay Ur, the “Ur of the Chaldees” to which the Bible refers.⁸⁴⁵

Keller continues to bring up the possibility that Woolley might have been wrong in designating the Ur of Abraham’s birthplace as being the Ur in southern Mesopotamia:

Woolley’s idea [of Ur in Sumeria being the homeland of Abraham] did not remain unchallenged. Very soon theologians and even archaeologists registered their dissent.

In favor of Woolley’s idea were the words of Gen. 11:31: “And Terah took Abram his son and Lot ... and they went forth ... from Ur of the Chaldees.” But there are other references in the Bible that point to some other place. When Abraham sent his old servant from Canaan to the city of Nahor, to fetch a wife for his son Isaac, he calls this place Nahor his “country” (Gen. 24:4), his “father’s house,” and “the land of my kindred” (Gen. 24:4). Nahor lay in the north of Mesopotamia. After the conquest of the Promised Land, Joshua addressed the people in these words: “Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor” (Josh. 24.2). In this case the “flood” means, as in other places in the Bible, the Euphrates: viewed from Canaan it lay on this side, not on the other side, of the “flood.” Had Woolley been too hasty in his conclusions? What reliable evidence had the expedition produced that Terah and his son Abraham lived actually in the city of Ur?⁸⁴⁶

Was there More than One Ur in “Mesopotamia?”

The broad area of “Mesopotamia”⁸⁴⁷ is where the city of Abraham’s Ur once stood. But where it was specifically located in Mesopotamia has been a matter that a number of scholars have long debated. Indeed, the question exists by the mere fact that there were other “Urs” (in one phonetic form or another) that could be candidates for the city in question.⁸⁴⁸ That being said the question arises as to which area is best suited for fitting all the historical criteria involved.

Enter Sir Leonard Woolley

The British archaeologist Leonard Woolley, who excavated the Sumerian city of Ur (tell al Muqayyar) back in the 1920’s, was of the belief that he had uncovered the ancient city of Abraham’s home of origin. This identification was nothing new. This site was first

identified as Ur shortly after Henry Rawlinson deciphered cuneiform. In 1854 an Englishman named J. E. Taylor dug up at the site some foundation deposits con-

⁸⁴⁴ James H. Platt, “Ur of the Chaldees,” in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. by Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 787.

⁸⁴⁵ Keller, *Bible as History*, 20-21.

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁸⁴⁷ Gr. “land between the rivers”, i.e., the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in present day Iraq.

⁸⁴⁸ For a list of other cities known as “Ur” in the area of ancient Mesopotamia, see Millard, “Abraham’s Ur,” *op.cit.*, 52-53, 57.

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taining clay cylinders with cuneiform writing all over them. When they were deciphered, they identified the site as Ur.⁸⁴⁹

Woolley believed to his dying day that he was digging up the very city of the Biblical Abraham and that some physical evidence would necessarily turn up to bolster that belief. Indeed, he was desperate in trying to find the absolute proof of such — some monument, some tablet, or any scrap of evidence that coincided with that which could substantiate his conviction. But alas, he never did find anything tangible that could settle the matter conclusively. In his book *Abraham: Recent Discoveries and Hebrew Origins* Woolley painfully lamented over that fact by stating:

But if these Mesopotamian excavations have produced no record whatsoever of Abraham, have they, it might be asked, any bearing on his history? Is there any justification for speaking of Ur in a book which professes to deal with Abraham?

The only thing we have to go upon is the categorical statement several times repeated in the Old Testament, that Abraham came from Ur. If we can be sure first, that the statement is trustworthy, and secondly, that by Ur is meant the city excavated by us in southern Mesopotamia, then there is a definite link between the two, and it remains to be seen whether that connection is worth following up.⁸⁵⁰

The Traditions of a Northern Mesopotamian “Ur”

The lack of physical evidence tying Abraham to the Southern Ur in Mesopotamia that Woolley sought reopened the door for other scholars to speculate that there were actually additional places better suited for the identification of “Ur of the Chaldees.” Indeed, even before Sumerian and Akkadian cuneiform tablets were translated in the twentieth century, some scholars of the mid-nineteenth century had already advanced propositions that Abraham’s Ur was not in the southern part of Mesopotamia, but rather in the Northern area of Mesopotamia. In fact, even as far back as 1853 in the pages of Kitto’s wonderful *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature* it was maintained that:

UR, of the Chaldees, was the native place of the family of Abraham, whence he migrated first to Haran and then to Canaan (Gen. xi. 28, 31 ; xv. 7; Neh. ix. 7; Acts vii. 4). The Biblical narratives supply only indirect implications as to the locality intended. From these we conclude that it was land lying to the East of Canaan, and affording suitable pasture-grounds for a nomade (*sic!*) race that had made some considerable progress in civilization. And as the Chaldees were originally a tribe of mountaineers in the high lands of Armenia, in those parts must we look for Ur of the Chaldees. With this view the most recent geographical researches are substantially in agreement. Ritter, in the last volume of his profound, comprehensive, and invaluable work (*Erdkunde*, vii. 320, sq.), after a review of all that has been ascertained respecting the countries covered by the Euphrates and the Tigris, from their sources to their mouths, gives it as his opinion that Ur was a district identical with the modern pachalic of Urfa, to which there belong several districts among others Rouha, which is in ancient Edessa.⁸⁵¹

The fact that ancient “Urfa” was identified as the place of “Ur of the Chaldees” back in the mid-nineteenth century is remarkable. It is a testimony to a tradition that would pre-date the modern opinion that Ur of the Chaldees was in the Babylonian sphere of Sumeria which represents the majority opinion of scholars today.

Again, in the 1868 edition of the renowned *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, we read a similar conclusion:

⁸⁴⁹ Hershel Shanks, “Abraham’s Ur: Is the Pope Going to the Wrong Place?” *Biblical Archaeological Review* (Jan/Feb 2000): 19.

⁸⁵⁰ Leonard Woolley, *Abraham: Recent Discoveries and Hebrew Origins* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1936), 10-11.

⁸⁵¹ John R. Beard, “Ur” in *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature* (John Kitto, ed., New York: Newman & Ivison, 1853), 2:899-900.

These are all the indications which Scripture furnishes as to its locality, (a.) One tradition identifies Ur with the modern *Orfah*. There is some ground for believing that this city, called by the Greeks Edessa, had also the name of Orrha as early as about B. C. 150. According to Pocock that Ur is Edessa or Orfah is “the universal opinion of the Jews;” and it is also the local belief. (b.) A tradition in the Talmud and in some of the early Arabian writers finds Ur in Warka, the Orchoe of the Greeks, and probably the Erech of Holy Scripture, (c.) A third tradition distinguishes Ur from Warka, while still placing it in the same region. There can be little doubt that this tradition points to the city which appears by its bricks to have been called Hur by the natives, and is now represented by the ruins at *Mugheir* or *Umgheir*. (d.) Bochart, Calmet, Bunsen, Michaelis, Gesenius, &c., unsupported by any tradition, identify “Ur of the Chaldees” with a place of the name, mentioned by Ammianus Marcellinus (fourth century A. C.) as “a castle” existing in his day in Eastern Mesopotamia, between Hatra and Nisibis.⁸⁵²

So, it would seem that in the mid-nineteenth century the tendency was to identify the city of “Ur of the Chaldees” with the towns of Urfa or Ura in Northern Mesopotamia. Let us pursue the Urfa traditions further.

There have been many discussions as to the position of Ur of the Chaldees. Some, on account of the distance from Canaan, apparently, have contended that Ur of the Chaldees is the same as the site known for many hundreds of years as Urfa, in Mesopotamia — the district in which the proto-martyr, St. Stephen (Acts vii.2, 41), places it. Mesopotamia, however, is an appellation of wide extent, and altogether insufficiently precise to enable the exact locality to be determined. To all appearance, though, Urfa or Orfa, called by the Greeks Edessa, was known as Orrha at the time of Isidore of Charax (date about 150 B.C.). Pocock, in his *Description of the East*,⁸⁵³ states that it is the universal opinion of the Jews that Orfa or Edessa was the ancient Ur of the Chaldees, and this is supported by local tradition, the chief place of worship there being called “the Mosque of Abraham,” and the pond in which the sacred fish are kept being called *Bahr Ibrahim el-Halil*, “the Lake of Abraham the Beloved.”⁸⁵⁴

The first place in Scripture where the phrase “Ur of the Chaldees” is mentioned is found in Genesis 11:28. An early commentary on this verse by a scholar by the name of George Bush basically reiterates the above information:

In Ur of the Chaldees. Heb. בְּאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים *be-Our Kasdim*. This is the first mention which the Scriptures make of the Kasdim or Chaldeans. Who these people really were, and whether they ever properly existed as a nation, is, as Heeren remarks one of the most difficult problems which history presents. ... As to the city here mentioned, some difficulty has been experienced by commentators in fixing its site, but in the East it is generally identified with the present town of *Orfah* in Upper Mesopotamia Two days’ journey east of the Euphrates, sixty-seven miles north-east of Beer. The Jews, according to Mr. Wolff, still call the place by the name in the text, אוּר כַּשְׁדִּים *Oor Kasdim*, or Ur of the Chaldees, and it is a place of pilgrimage as the birth-place of Abraham, in whose honour the Moslems have

⁸⁵² George Rawlinson, “Ur” in *Smith’s Bible Dictionary*, ed. Samuel W. Barnum (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1868), 1147.

⁸⁵³ The article referenced here by “Pococke” states: “This place is called Ourfa by the Arabs, but the Turks give it the name of Roiha or Rouha. It is generally agreed to be the ancient city of Edessa; and many learned men, and the Jews universally are of opinion, that it is Ur of the Chaldees. The latter say, that this place is called in scripture Our-casdin, that is, the fire of Chaldæa, out of which, they say, God brought Abraham; and on this account the Talmudists affirm, that Abraham was here cast into the fire, and was miraculously delivered” (Richard Gravelot Pococke, Francois Hubert, and Charles Grignon, *A Description of the East; and Some other Countries* [London: W. Bowyer for the author, 1743-1745], vol. 2, part 1, page 159). The Talmudic reference is Genesis Rabbah 38:11 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, 363-364).

⁸⁵⁴ T. G. Pinches, *The Old Testament* ((London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1908), 192-93; also “Ur of the Chaldees” in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. James Hastings (New York: T & T. Clark, 1910), 4:836.

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a fine mosque in the court of which is a lake teeming with fish which are held sacred to the patriarch’ and not permitted to be caught. ... The primitive name of the city was changed by the Macedonians when they became possessed of it to Edessa and under that name was the capital of a territory called Osrhoene, occupying the northern and most fruitful part of Mesopotamia ...⁸⁵⁵

Scholars Begin to Question the Southern Sumerian Ur

A new generation of scholars within recent years have written articles that point to a renewed interest in identifying the Biblical “Ur of the Chaldees” as being in the region of northern Mesopotamia. Jack Finegan is one such scholar:

Abram or Abraham is described as coming from Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen. 11:31, etc.) ... The reference to Ur as “of the Chaldeans” may ... point to the well-known city of that name (Tell al-Muqayyar) in Lower Mesopotamia, although it is also possible that there was another city of the same name in the northwest, perhaps at Urfa or vicinity, and that the later is intended.⁸⁵⁶

In another publication Finegan states that it is “possible” for a northern Mesopotamian Ur:

The migration of Abraham from Mesopotamia, in response to a divine call and promise (Genesis 12:1-3; cf. Hebrews 11:8-10), was regarded as the initial act of faith which made possible the unfolding of all the later history of his descendants. That Abraham’s home was originally in Mesopotamia, and specifically at the cities of Ur and Haran, is indicated in several strands of Old Testament narrative. ... It has ordinarily been supposed that the Ur referred to in the foregoing citations was the well-known city in lower Mesopotamia already described ... In Genesis 24 (J), however, Abraham speaks of “my country” (v. 4) and “the land of my birth” (v. 7) and then sends his servant “to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor” (v. 10). Since Nahor was doubtless in northwestern Mesopotamia the question has been raised whether Abraham’s original home should not be sought in that region rather than in lower Mesopotamia.⁸⁵⁷

Enter Dr. Cyrus H. Gordon

One of the co-excavators of the Sumerian Ur with Leonard Woolley was a young Cyrus H. Gordon, who became a great linguistic scholar in his own right.⁸⁵⁸ Since he was one of the excavators of the Southern Ur, his opinion should be considered significant.

Cyrus Gordon has become one of the strongest advocates in defending the older position that the Ur of Abraham was in Northern Mesopotamia — not the Ur south of the city of Babylon. In his popular book, *The Ancient Near East*, Gordon wrote:

Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham was born, as well as Haran, turns out to be in north Mesopotamia. The Patriarchs have no direct connection with the Ur in Sumer. In all probability, Ur of the Chaldees was a commercial colony founded in the far north by the Third Dynasty of Ur (around 2000 B.C.), and named after the capital of the Empire.⁸⁵⁹

Dr. Gordon initially made his case in an earlier journal article appealing to our common sense concerning the route taken by Abraham from Ur to Haran:

⁸⁵⁵ George Bush, *Notes Critical and Practical on the Book of Genesis* (New York: Iveson & Phinney, 1859), 189.

⁸⁵⁶ Finegan, *Archaeological History*, 68.

⁸⁵⁷ Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*, 1:70-71.

⁸⁵⁸ The author was privileged to have personally met Dr. Gordon on several occasions and have enjoyed his lectures open to the public in the mid-seventies at New York University in Manhattan, New York City.

⁸⁵⁹ Cyrus H. Gordon, *The Ancient Near East* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1965), 132.

It is probable that *Ūra* (which would come into Hebrew as *Ūr*, without the final vowel) is Ur of the Chaldees, Abraham's birthplace. In any case, Ur of the Chaldees can hardly be Babylonian Ur in the south. Gen. 11:31 tells us that Terah moved from Ur of the Chaldees via Haran en route to Canaan. Any route from the Ur excavated by Sir C. Leonard Woolley to Canaan would not go so far north or east as Haran. **The Ur of the Chaldees in Genesis has to be north or east (probably northeast) of Haran for Terah's itinerary to make sense.**⁸⁶⁰

One of the things to note here is that Dr. Gordon is not suggesting that the Ur of the Chaldees was the Urfa, which former scholars of the mid-nineteenth century suggested, but rather a place called *Ūra* in the area under the control of the Hittites. In his concluding remarks in his *JNES* article Gordon finalized the following:

It is now clear that Abraham was a merchant prince; a *tamkârum* from the Hittite realm. Thus his birthplace, Ur of the Chaldees, was Ura, whence so many merchants came, is, though not proved, quite likely.⁸⁶¹

When Gordon penned his last article on Abraham's Ur he was still as vehement as ever in his passionate language concerning Abraham's route to Haran:

Genesis 11:31 relates that "Terah took Abram ... and they went out ... from Ur of the Chaldees to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there." Then Terah died (Genesis 11:32) and Abram went on to Canaan (Genesis 12:15). This means that Haran was en route from Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan. **By no stretch of the imagination would anyone go from Sumerian Ur (in southern Mesopotamia) to Canaan via Haran.**⁸⁶²

Gordon's statements above, *viz.*, "to make sense" or "by no stretch of the imagination", certainly come off as a desperate plea of a losing argument devoid of real facts. Maybe it's time to step back and understand the premises which Dr. Gordon is coming from, and look at the facts rather than just an appeal to our feelings.

First of all, Dr. Gordon believed that Abraham was above all "a nomadic merchant" in the same vein as the merchants of Ura:

The trading interests of the patriarchs are confirmed by Gen. 34:10 where the Shechemites invite Jacob's household to unite with them: "And with us you may dwell and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade therein, and acquire real estate in it." This passage brings out three basic features of the *tamkâru* in the document of Hattusili cited above. (1) The patriarchs, like the merchants of Ura, went abroad to do business. (2) Settling down in a foreign area of opportunity would normally be pleasing to men who were regularly kept on the move. ... And (3) acquiring real estate in the land of their activity was a chronic wish of the merchants that was generally dined to them.⁸⁶³

Why was Abraham called out of Ur in the first place?

Although we may accept the fact that Abraham may have become a "nomadic merchant" while he later dwelt in Haran, nevertheless, one should realize that there is nothing here to support the idea that Abraham was formerly a nomadic merchant *prior* to coming to Haran. Right? Indeed, the entire thesis of Dr. Gordon hinges on the tenuous fact that Abraham was already a nomadic merchant upon arriving in Haran. Are we to accept that premise without question?

⁸⁶⁰ Cyrus H. Gordon, "Abraham and the Merchants of Ura," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 17:1 (Jan. 1958): 29.

⁸⁶¹ Gordon, "Merchants of Ura," 32.

⁸⁶² Cyrus H. Gordon, "Where Is Abraham's Ur?," *Biblical Archaeological Review* 3:2 (June 1977): 20 (emphasis the author's).

⁸⁶³ Gordon, "Merchants of Ura," 29.

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Let us not forget that Abraham was *called* out of Ur by God, not as a merchant with profit motives, but for a specific reason that has spiritual implications. It was a type of coming out of “sin,” similar to the Israelites coming out of Egypt. This is a constant theme in all of Judaic history:

Go out from Babylon; flee from Chaldea; declare this with a shout of joy; proclaim it; send it forth to the end of the earth; say, “The Lord has redeemed his servant Jacob!” (Isa 48:20).

Flee from Babylon, and go out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be like male goats leading the flock (Jer 50:8).

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! ... “Come out of her, my people, so that you do not take part in her sins ...” (Rev 18:2, 4).

Here we have Biblical texts that associate Babylon and Chaldea in the same breath. The city of Ur in southern Mesopotamia was situated in the very vicinity of ancient Babylon. It encompassed the entire embodiment of Babylonian society. To be coming out of Ur was tantamount to coming out of sinful Babylon itself. This would be the *spiritual* reason for the calling of Abram out of Ur.

But what reason would Dr. Gordon give us for the calling of Abram out of Ur if Abram was nothing more than a nomadic merchant before leaving Ur and remained a nomadic merchant after coming to Haran? What had changed? Is there any Biblical point to be made in any of this? The “nomadic merchant” argument is devoid of any real spiritual reason for us to see a more profound truth in the entire story. This argument alone confronts us with a challenge to the Northern Mesopotamian theory for the location of “Ur of the Chaldees.”

The Long Distance Traveled

Let us consider another point. Some would point to the extremely long distance of a thousand miles from the southern city of Ur to Haran as being objectionable. But is this a valid objection at all?

It is said that the southern Ur is too far from Haran, about a thousand miles. But merchants and others in the early second millennium B.C. routinely traveled long distances. The traders who went from Ashur to Anatolia between about 1950 and 1750 B.C. followed routes that ran up to the Black Sea coast and ran across central Anatolia. Their business had southerly connections into Babylonia, and letters of Babylonian merchants in the same period report their activities far up the Euphrates, at Emar, going via Haran. The route did not follow the Euphrates; perhaps to avoid hostile territory, it ran further east, up the Tigris, swing west across Upper Mesopotamia.⁸⁶⁴

Indeed, the long distance from the southern Ur to Haran might just be a formidable reason to reject the northern Ur. Consider the poignant observation made by Leonard Woolley himself:

The proximity of Urfa and Haran was a strong argument against the former's being Ur. **The migration of Terah's house becomes rather ridiculous if the move were but for a dozen miles, or so and the new home was actually in sight of the old.**⁸⁶⁵

This poignant observation must be acknowledged by all. This point is not a trivial, but one that casts (or should cast) the entire northern theory of the city of Ur into question. Does it even make sense that this whole migration story was allegorically from Brooklyn to the Bronx? See the absurdity?

⁸⁶⁴ Millard, “Abraham's Ur,” 53.

⁸⁶⁵ Woolley *Abraham*, 60 (author's emphasis).

Abraham and Sumerian Culture

Tradition has it the Abraham had become a scientist in his own right.⁸⁶⁶ Where did he get that knowledge? In the back hills of Northern Mesopotamia? Or, rather, in the sophisticated cultural centers of Sumeria?

Let us consider the facts. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers are introduced to us in the opening chapters of the Bible as emanating from the Garden of Eden itself (Gen 2:14). The earliest influential cultures in the early history of human civilization flourished on the banks of these important rivers, including Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, and Hittite civilizations.

Consider also the fact that the Sumerians introduced the sexagesimal numerical system that to this very day is seen in the division of the modern 24 hour day (4 X 6), then broken down into 60 minutes, with each minute further broken down into seconds, and then thirds, *etc.* The circle itself is divided into 360 degrees within our modern mathematics. The Sumerians were the first to establish commercial banking, standardize weights and measures, make legal contracts, codified laws, developed a sophisticated system of writing, *etc.*⁸⁶⁷

Such significant facts need to be weighed in considering that Abraham's behavior shows us that he was well acquainted with laws of a sophisticated society, legal inheritance, burial customs, hospitality — an important factor in the Middle Eastern culture to this day. This certainly must be presented as evidence that Abraham was a immigrant out of the cultural influence of Sumeria.

Woolley summed up his views on Abraham and Ur in the following significant remarks:

Abraham did not come away from Ur empty handed. He brought with him a pride in his upbringing, in the greatness of his city ... He brought with him those stories of the world's creation and of the Flood which, moralized by his descendants, have been as history or as parable treasure by half the world for four thousand years. He brought with him the laws of Ur and, handing them down through the generations of his house, laid the foundations of that mosaic code which is still the Law of the Jews and had been professedly adopted by most Christian nations as the basis of their own systems.⁸⁶⁸

The "Land of Shinar"

There are many Midrash traditions in the Talmud, the *Book of Jasher*, the *Book of Jubilees*, and so on, that preserve narratives concerning Abraham and his father, Terah, as being opponents of Nimrod, the builder of the Tower of Babel whose "beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar" (Gen 10:10). Obviously, Shinar in this context means the very same area where these ancient cities flourished — Southern Mesopotamia!

The meaning of Shinar is clear from the biblical references. It is the area known to the Mesopotamians as 'the land of Sumer and Akkad,' corresponding to the portion of modern Iraq S of Baghdad. This meaning is confirmed by the LXX, *Targum Onqelos*, and the *Genesis Apocryphon*. All three sometimes translate 'Shinar' as Babylon(ia).⁸⁶⁹

Nebuchadnezzar had taken the vessels from the Temple in Jerusalem and brought them to the "land of Shinar" (Dan 1:2) — *i.e.*, Babylon, where Nebuchadnezzar's palace resided. Furthermore, Abraham is said to have had a hostile encounter with a four king coalition, one of whom was

⁸⁶⁶ See pages 56-58 above.

⁸⁶⁷ See Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer*.

⁸⁶⁸ Woolley, *Abraham*, 187.

⁸⁶⁹ James R. Davila, "Shinar," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 5:1220.

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‘Amraphel king of Shinar’ (Gen 14:1, 9).⁸⁷⁰ As will be brought out in the next volume, Amraphel turns out to be the Ur-lugal of the Sumerian King lists who reigned from 1988-1958 BCE.

Thus, we have Biblical confirmation as to where the Land of Shinar was situated. It was in the area of ancient Babylonia — to be sure — it was not in the area of Northern Mesopotamia.⁸⁷¹

Was Ur Situated Beyond the Euphrates River?

This argument appears to be the tie breaker argument. Let’s see. In the *Book of Joshua* we have a direct statement that Terah, the father of Abraham, lived beyond the “river” [Euphrates].

And Joshua said to all the people: “The Eternal, the God of Israel, said the following: ‘your forefathers — Terah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor — lived **beyond the River** in former times, and worshiped other gods. Nevertheless, I took your father Abraham from **beyond the River** and led him through all the land of Canaan and multiplied his progeny. ...’⁸⁷²

Gary Rendsburg commented on this verse:

In the Bible, when the phrase ‘beyond the River’ appears without further designation, it refers to the Euphrates River. But the Sumerian city of Ur is not “beyond the Euphrates,” but rather on the Euphrates, and on its western side, thus not “beyond” it from the perspective of Israel. ...

Furthermore, the implication of the phrase *בְּעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר יָשְׁבוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵעוֹלָם* “your forefathers dwelt beyond the River in olden times” implies that the original homeland, which was Ur-Kasdim according to Genesis 11 and 15, was also beyond the Euphrates. In light of all this, Sumerian Ur cannot be the referent, as it is on the same side of the Euphrates as Canaan.⁸⁷³

This all sounds good on the surface, but a counter-argument has been put forth by Millard:

Another objection is that the southern Ur lies west of the Euphrates, so it could not be described as “across” the river (Genesis 31:21). But the course of the Euphrates River near Ur is not well defined in the second millennium B.C.. Woolley stated that the “river washed the foot of the western rampart,” taking a new course to the east during the mid-first millennium B.C. For anyone living in the Levant, Babylonian Ur would have lain conceptually “beyond the river,” whatever the precise geography.⁸⁷⁴

Thus, the objection that Abraham’s Ur was not situated beyond the river Euphrates fails to be the decisive tie-breaker that at first it was promoted to be.

At this point we should be ready to answer the opening question with a resounding *yes!*

⁸⁷⁰ That Amraphel was once identified with Hammurabi is now a discredited theory that should be abandoned. “Amraphel was identified with Hammurabi by Schrader (SPAW 1887: 600-5), who assumed that the biblical form of the name arose from a miswritten Hebrew rendering a variant of the cuneiform name. This identification, once widely accepted, was later virtually abandoned, mainly because Hammurabi was never active in the W,” Michael C. Astour, “Amraphel,” in the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 1:217.


⁸⁷¹ Dr. Herman L. Hoeh, to whom this book is dedicated, found the “Urfa” theory so compelling that he endorsed it stating: “The city of Ur in Babylonian history is not the Ur from which Abram came. Abram’s Ur was Urfa in northern Mesopotamia, not on the fringes of Shinar.” *Compendium*, 1:252b.

⁸⁷² Josh 24:2-3 (author’s translation). Note that the JPS version of the Tanakh went ahead and translated “beyond the river” as “beyond the Euphrates” (*JPS Hebrew-English TANAKH* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999], 509). This is so rendered in the *New Revised Standard Version*, the *Revised English Bible*, the *New International Version*, the *New American Standard Bible*, to name a few. The *King James Bible* renders this verse as “from the other side of the flood.”

⁸⁷³ Gary Rendsburg, “Ur Kasdim: Where Is Abraham’s Birthplace?” *TheTorah.com* (2019). Online at <https://thetorah.com/article/ur-kasdim-where-is-abrahams-birthplace> (accessed Feb 19, 2023).

APPENDIX 5

THE COUNTING OF THE SABBATICAL AND JUBILEE
YEARS

 **FTER** CONSUMING A SUMPTUOUS MEAL WHAT COULD BE BETTER THAN TO TOP IT OFF with a delicious dessert? This is known as saving the best for last. If the reader has thus far not been convinced of the chronology presented herein, hang onto your seats. Here comes the *pièce de résistance*.

We begin by asking: If the counting of Sabbatical years is a Mosaic institution, then when did it start? Does anyone know the answer? We have no direct statements that we can turn to within Scripture that tells us when it began, but we do have historical records that give us dates that can be determined to be Sabbatical years. From these known dates, is it possible to retro-calculate Sabbatical years back to the time of the Exodus and the Conquest of Canaan? Indeed, can we even dare to backtrack Sabbatical years to Creation itself? And if we could, what does that mean in terms of the chronology established in this volume?

⁸⁷⁴ Millard, "Abraham's Ur," 53-4. Furthermore, H. W. F. Saggs additionally noted that: "Sir Leonard Woolley made the further point that in antiquity the Euphrates flowed west of Ur, so that the city itself was, from the viewpoint of Palestine, 'beyond the River'; see *Abraham*, 63." (Henry W. F. Saggs. "Ur of the Chaldees: A Problem of Identification." *Iraq* 22 [Spring - Autumn, 1960]: 201.). That the Euphrates flowed west of Ur was also upheld in a recent study P. R. S. Moorey, *Ur "of the Chaldees."* *A Revised and Updated Edition of Sir Leonard Woolley's Excavations at Ur* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1982), 138, 263.

The Counting of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

Sabbatical Years as a Chronological Benchmark

It stands to reason that if there is a count of every seven years to mark the occurrence of Land Sabbaths mentioned in Exodus 23:10-11, then such an occasion, which could be established from ancient testimony, is extremely important for overall chronological purposes. Of course, in order to utilize this sequence we must be sure where to start the count.

Some have guessed that the counting of the Sabbatical years and the Jubilee years most likely began when Israel entered Canaan 40 years after the Exodus. Others believe that since it took seven years to conquer the land, then that was the time for the beginning such the sequence. Dr. Finegan's discusses this in his book on Biblical chronology:

In the account of the institution of the law of the Sabbatical year in Leviticus 25:2 the Lord instructs Moses to say to the people of Israel, "When you come into the land which I give you, the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord," and it is of course evident that the law could only have been actually observed when the people were in their own agricultural land. The *Seder 'Olam Rabbah* (11.69-70) accordingly gives dates for related biblical events — the people spent fourteen years at Gilgal (Josh 5:9-10) and seven years in conquering the land (Josh 6.2ff.), then (in the fifteenth year) assembled at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting (Josh. 18:1) and, "At this time, they began to count (for the purpose of reckoning) tithes, Sabbatical years, and Jubilees."⁸⁷⁵ ... Later, according to Neh 8:1ff., when Ezra read "the book of the law of Moses" to the people after the return from the Babylonian exile he called them to repent of much disobedience (Neh 9:33-34), and the people in response (Neh 10:29-31) covenanted to keep the law and promised among other things to "forego the crops of the seventh year and the exaction of every debt." Thus, (30.31-37) say that Scripture compares the incoming of the people in the time of Ezra to their incoming in the time of Joshua: "Just as at their incoming in the time of Joshua they became subject to tithes, Sabbatical years, and Jubilees ... so too at their incoming in the time of Ezra."⁸⁷⁶

So, from this, we can see that the calculations of the events at the time of the Conquest are totally dependent on the date of the Exodus itself. So, when did the Exodus occur? Ah, there's the rub.

Dating the Exodus

Most Biblical scholars today date the Exodus in the year of 1446 BCE.⁸⁷⁷ Where did they get that date? It is mainly derived from the chronology of a modern scholar by the name of Edwin R. Thiele,⁸⁷⁸ who placed the division of the Kingdom of Israel at King Solomon's death in the year of 931/30 BCE.⁸⁷⁹ This would place the 40 year reign of King Solomon beginning in the year of 971/70 BCE. In his fourth year King Solomon began to build the Temple in Jerusalem, being 480 years since the Exodus (1 Kgs 6:1). That brings us to the year of 967/66 BCE for the start of the Temple's

⁸⁷⁵ This quotation seems like it is coming from the Bible, but it is not. It is from the *Seder Olam*.

⁸⁷⁶ Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 117.

⁸⁷⁷ Among the supporters of this dates, the significant supporters are: Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 201 [§356]; Andrew E. Steinmann, *Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011), 45-53; Rodger C. Young, "Evidence for Inerrancy from a Second Unexpected Source: The Jubilee and Sabbatical Cycles," online at <https://biblearchaeology.org/research/chronological-categories/exodus-era/2662-evidence-for-inerrancy-from-a-second-unexpected-source-the-jubilee-and-sabbatical-cycles> (accessed Feb 24, 2023).

⁸⁷⁸ Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdsman, 1965). Any one who seriously studies Thiele's work soon realizes that it is a bewildering escapade into the tedious and mind-boggling controversies that would make one's head spin. The result is that many scholars are satisfied that if it agrees with the Assyrian records, then fine, Thiele's work will be the excuse for accepting his dating system and be done with it.

⁸⁷⁹ See Finegan, *Handbook* (1998), 248-49, for a synopsis of Thiele's thesis.

construction. Thus, 480 years earlier would be the year of 1447/46 BCE for the Exodus. It was forty years hence that the Israelites entered into the Land of Canaan, which is how the year of 1407/6 BCE was derived.

The problem with this chronology is the fact that it relies solely on Assyrian records for the period of the divided Monarchy at the expense of Biblical chronology, as has been amply demonstrated within this volume. So, any attempt to use this data for establishing the Sabbatical years is accordingly a foolhardy exercise in futility which has no merits for any further discussion. And indeed, it produces a Sabbatical sequence which is out of sync with the Sabbatical cycle that can be established by the historical records of the Jews from the time of Ezra and Nehemiah on down.

By the chronology developed herein it was the year of 1493 BCE that the Exodus occurred.⁸⁸⁰ Forty years later brings us 1453 BCE for the entry into Canaan. But did the counting of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years begin at that time or some time thereafter? Let us continue in this quest.

The Problem of Establishing Sabbatical Years

As it turns out, establishing the sequence of Sabbatical years from historical records is an illusive exercise since there exists no direct testimony that such and such a year was in fact a Sabbatical year. So, what scholars have done is to point to certain years in the documents that allude to activities associated with Sabbatical years, specifically the requirement to allow the land to rest from agriculture in such years.

The Orthodox Jewish community of today has established a sequence of Sabbatical years based upon their interpretation of the *Seder Olam* and certain passages from the Talmud. And what is that sequence? If we go to the Orthodox Jewish website “www.chabad.org” under the heading of “When is the next Sabbatical year?” written by a Baruch S. Davidson, it there states:

The year 5789 on the Jewish calendar (Sept. 20, 2028–Sept. 9, 2029) will be the next Sabbatical year. The year following [*sic!* should be “prior to”] the destruction of the second Holy Temple (3829 from creation, equivalent to 68–69 CE) was the first year of the seven-year Sabbatical cycle. We continue counting sevens from then.⁸⁸¹

Despite this unfortunate and erroneous explanation, where did the Jewish people of today get the idea that the counting of Sabbatical years started from the year before the destruction of the Second Temple? That concept was finalized by a study done in the mid-nineteenth century by one Benedict Zuckermann.⁸⁸² And being the only serious study at the time, the Zuckermann sequence was not only adopted by the Orthodox Jewish community back then, but also by the modern state of Israel. But does that sequence still hold up?

Zuckermann based his date for the Fall of Jerusalem both in the sixth century BCE under Nebuchadnezzar, but also in the first century CE under Titus, on the text in the *Seder Olam* which states:

⁸⁸⁰ See page 165 of this volume.

⁸⁸¹ See online at https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/538797/jewish/When-is-the-next-Sabbatical-year.htm (accessed Feb. 7, 2023). Of course, this explanation is in total error because the year following of the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE would be the year 70-71 CE — not 68–69 CE as this article states — which would make the next Sabbatical year in our time to occur in 2024-2025 CE, which is two years later than the present count by the Chabad itself. So, obviously this explanation an embarrassing blunder — the actual count is from the year **before** the destruction of the Temple, *viz.*, 68-69 CE — in order to come up with their date of 2028-2029 CE.

⁸⁸² Benedict Zuckermann, *A Treatise on the Sabbatical Cycle and the Jubilee* (Breslau: Fraenckelscher Stiftung, 1857. Translated from the German by A. Löwy; London: Chronological Institute, 1866; repr. New York: Sepher Hermon Press, 1974).

The Counting of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

R. Yose says: ... You find it said that the destruction of the first Temple was at the end of Sabbath, at the end of Sabbatical year ...⁸⁸³

This passage seems straightforward by itself and should be decisive, *n'est-ce pas?* But another study done in the Reformed Jewish community has since challenged the Zuckermann sequence by a new study done by the scholar Ben Zion Wacholder.⁸⁸⁴ And, according to this new study, the actual year of the Destruction of the Temple was itself a Sabbatical year rather than a post-Sabbatical year.

Nevertheless, despite Ben Wacholder's monumental study seemingly settling the matter, another study was done soon afterward by a Christian scholar by the name of Donald Blosser, which has come in defense of Zuckermann's sequence.⁸⁸⁵ So, now the plot thickens. At this juncture, once again, we are forced to absorb ourselves into the minutiae of another point of view.

Concerning the contention against Wacholder's view, Blosser maintains the following:

Wacholder contests this chronology, using War IV.537 as proof. "Simon ... marched into Idumaea ... where he gained abundant booty and laid hands on vast supplies of corn. ... He says that this proves 68/69 AD could not have been a sabbath year because there wouldn't have been vast supplies of grain on hand. We disagree, believing instead that this further supports a 68/69 AD sabbath year. The Jews would have stored additional grain from the normal 67/68 AD harvest in order to carry them through the 68/69 AD sabbath year as well as in the start of the 69/70 AD eighth year. There would have been large corn supplies just as Josephus said. See Wacholder, "Calendar", p. 176.⁸⁸⁶

At this point, Blosser sat back and awaited Wacholder's response. But his obscure thesis from a small Scottish college sat quietly for several years without any direct response from Ben Zion Wacholder. Then, in 1981, Don Blosser decided to condense his thesis and submit it as an article for the *Hebrew Union College Annual*, the very publication of Wacholder's alma mater.⁸⁸⁷ Surely, this would excite a rejoinder from Wacholder himself. And sure enough, it worked.⁸⁸⁸

Wacholder indeed responded and he went directly for the jugular:

Unfortunately, Blosser's use of the sources is questionable. The basic problem is that it deals exclusively with Josephus, ignoring altogether contemporary documents discovered in the wilderness of Judea. The question of Jewish calendation is not historiographic but historical — How and when was the sabbatical year observed?⁸⁸⁹

Poof, there went Blosser's thesis. In other words, Wacholder believed that the tie-breaker was to be found in the evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls, which, of course, Zuckermann did not have access to in the mid-nineteenth century. Wacholder's concluding remarks thus were:

Zuckerman and Schürer and those who followed them correctly built their sabbatical calendar on *S. 'olam 30* because it was the least doubtful passage available to them. Now the newly-found contract at Murabba'at makes all studies that fol-

⁸⁸³ *Seder Olam* 30:74a-75a, "Nehemiah to End of Second Temple" (Guggenheimer, 264). If the destruction occurred "at the end of a Sabbatical year" then that means an inclusive reckoning that it occurred during that Sabbatical year.

⁸⁸⁴ Ben Zion Wacholder, "The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles," *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 44 [1973]: 153-96.

⁸⁸⁵ Donald Wilford Blosser, "Jesus and the Jubilee: Luke 4:16-30, The Year of Jubilee and Its Significance in the Gospel of Luke" (Ph.D. diss., St. Mary's College, The University of St. Andres, Scotland, 1979).

⁸⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 112, fn 3.

⁸⁸⁷ Don Blosser, "The Sabbath Year Cycle in Josephus," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 52 (1981): 129-39.

⁸⁸⁸ Ben Zion Wacholder, "The Calendar of Sabbath Years during the Second Temple Era: A Response," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 54 (1983) 123-33.

⁸⁸⁹ Wacholder, "A Response," 124.

low the calendar and Zuckermann and Schürer obsolete. In a word, the tables of sabbatical cycles that appeared in *HUCA* 44 (1973) 185-96 are secure.⁸⁹⁰

But wait a minute. Does not the dating of the Murabba'at contracts depend on the chronology of the Second Jewish Revolt? Even though the chronology of the Bar Kokhba period appears to be a settled matter, there is always the concern as to whether these dates were counted inclusively versus exclusively, Tishri years versus Nisan years, *etc.*

Professor Jack Finegan noted that

Wacholder (*Essays*, 19 no. 7) thinks that "there is no reason ... to assume that our document was in fact antedated," but evidence seems to be otherwise, so this can be regarded, in fact, as an interesting example of antedating.⁸⁹¹

Whaaaaat??? So, here we go again. Dr. Finegan then finalizes his remarks by stating:

Wacholder dates the first year of the liberation of Israel from Nisan 1, a.d. 132, to Adar 29, 133; the twentieth of Shebat in the second year of the liberation roughly in Feb 134; and counts the time of the contract as five years, six months, and ten days, running to the last day of Elul (roughly Sept) in 139. Therefore, the next Shemittah, to which the contract refers, is Tishri 139 to Elul 140, which **is in accordance with Wacholder's tabulation of Sabbatical years**. Contrariwise, we maintain the analysis above, with the next Sabbatical year in 138/139, and this agrees with the tabulation by Zuckermann and Blosser.⁸⁹²

In other words, Finegan is admitting that Wacholder's chronology is correct, but nevertheless, his conclusions on the dating sequence of Sabbatical years are wrong. Why? Simply because Finegan interprets the data differently, based on his own "analysis." And how does he "maintain" his own analysis? Well, he simply accepts Zuckermann's sequence and then moves backward and forward from Zuckermann's dates he thus feels this is valid evidence in itself. It's enough to make one's head spin and there is no way that such methodology will ever get to a determinative answer.

We are therefore stuck in the weeds and have lost sight of the bigger picture. It is time to put all these arguments aside and simply look at what we have with the chronology that has been established herein.

When Did the Counting of Sabbatical Years Begin?

The command to keep a weekly Sabbath Day as a Holy institution was established at Mount Sinai with the giving of the Ten Commandments. But the declaration was presented back in Genesis 2:1 when "God blessed the seventh day and made it holy." And if the counting of Sabbath days goes all the way back to the time of Creation, what about the counting of Sabbatical years? Notice a very interesting statement by Josephus concerning this:

...the Jews observe the rest every seventh year, **as they do every seventh day**.⁸⁹³

This passage compares the two observances "as" being equal. And since the date of the creation of Adam occurred in 3971 BCE, then from that year on a numerical counting of Sabbatical years exists, whether or not it was observed as a Sabbatical year of rest. Now when this is done it turns out that the year of the Exodus, 1493 BCE, was a Sabbatical year. And interestingly, this year just so happened to be the 360th Sabbatical year since creation, being exactly 2520 years.

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 133.

⁸⁹¹ Finegan, *Handbook*, 124.

⁸⁹² Finegan, *Handbook*, 126.

⁸⁹³ Josephus, *Ant.*, 13.8.1 [§234] (Whiston, 351) (author's emphasis).

The Counting of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

This further means that 40 years later from the Exodus (1453 BCE) was the fifth year of the fifth Sabbatical year after the Exodus which means that it was two years later, in the year of 1451 BCE, that the next Sabbatical year would occur. It therefore makes perfect sense that the count for the Jubilee years would begin at this Sabbatical year.

Notice also that by the *Seder Olam* chronology — which places the Jewish year of Creation in 3761 BCE — the difference is 210 years from our date of 3971 BCE. Isn't it interesting that that difference is divisible by 7 with no remainder, resulting in exactly 30 Sabbatical cycles? This would mean that whatever Sabbatical cycle that the Jews later observed in the first century of the common era would also be a Biblical Sabbatical year in the chronology established herein. What an amazing coincidence! Yet, we have no such agreement with Jewish chronology and a sequence of Sabbatical years counting from the fictitious date of 1406 BCE.

Also, this sequence of Sabbatical years aligns perfectly with the sequence of Sabbatical years established by Ben Zion Wacholder, which should give us further confidence in the sequence established herein. So, let us now compare the Sabbatical years from Creation against the Biblical chronology and see the astonishing results.

Sabbatical Years and the Final Jubilee

Table 29:

| Sabbatical Years Throughout History | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|----------------|--|
| Sabbatical Cycle | Years AM | Dates (BCE/CE) | Description of Events |
| 1 | 0 | 3971 | Creation of Adam. Seven Year Cycles begin. |
| 30 | 210 | 3761 | Hebrew Calendar established in the 210 th year of Adam and the 80 th year of Seth. |
| 251 | 1757 | 2214 | Earth Divided second year after Flood |
| 289 | 2023 | 1948 | Abram, age 75, is called in a Sabbatical year |
| 354 | 2478 | 1493 | Exodus occurs in the 354 th Sabbatical year. ^a |
| 360 | 2520 | 1451 | Jubilee year count begins in the 42 nd year of Exodus (40 + 2). ^b |
| 422 | 2954 | 1017 | King Solomon begins reign in a Sabbatical year. |
| 487 | 3407 | 562 | Jewish King Jehoiachin released in Babylon in a Sabbatical year. ^c |
| 502 | 3514 | 457 | Ezra goes to Jerusalem in a Sabbatical year. ^d |
| 520 | 3640 | 331 | Alexander exempts Jews from taxation. ^e |

Table 29:

| Sabbatical Years Throughout History | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|---|
| Sabbatical Cycle | Years AM | Dates (BCE/CE) | Description of Events |
| 544 | 3808 | 163 | Judas Maccabee defeated in a year of rest. ^f |
| 548 | 3836 | 135 | Murder of Simon the Hasmonean. ^g |
| 562 | 3934 | 37 | Herod conquers Jerusalem. ^h |
| 564 | 3948 | 23 BCE | Herod commenced work on the Second Temple ⁱ |
| 567 | 3969 | 2 CE | Jesus born (3-2 BCE). ^j |
| 571 | 3997 | 27-28 | Beginning of Jesus' Ministry. ^k |
| 573 | 4011 | 41 | King Agrippa I recites Deut. 7:15 in a Post-Sabbatical Year. ^l |
| 573 | 4011 | 41-42 | Disciples sent out 12 years after Resurrection. ^m |
| 574 | 4018 | 48 | In 50 CE Apostle Paul writes that the Galatians were observing “days, months, times, and <i>YEARS</i> ” ⁿ |
| 575 | 4025 | 55 | Apostle Paul writes II Corinthians in 54 CE about a collection for the poor in preparation for an upcoming Sabbatical year. |
| 575 | 4025 | 55 | Papyrus of Wadi Murabba'at, second year of Nero, during “year of Release.” ^o |
| 577 | 4039 | 69 | Destruction of Second Temple occurred “at end of” a Sabbatical year. ^p |
| 586 | 4102 | 132 | Bar Kokhba revolt begins in a Sabbatical year. ^q |
| 856 | 5992 | 2022-23 | The present year of 2023 is a Sabbatical year |
| 857 | 5999-6000 | 2029-30 | A Sabbatical year. |
| 71 st Jubilee | 6000-6001 | 2030-31 | Final Jubilee and 600 th year of Adam. |

The Counting of the Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

a. An interesting sideline is that the number 354 for the Sabbatical cycle of the Exodus just so happens to be the exact number of days of an average twelve month Hebrew Calendar year, wherein a typical lunar month equals 29 and a half days (29.5 days * 12 months = 354 days). It is at the time at the Exodus that Moses initiated a calendar reform in making the month Nisan, instead of the month of Tishri, to be the beginning of the ecclesiastical year for the counting of the annual Holy Days listed in Leviticus 23. Could it be that the Calendar rules were also then established, including the postponements of Tishri 1, in order to properly keep the Holy days? One thing we know is that the blowing of the silver trumpets were to announce the new month for the first seven months of the year in which the Holy Days would occur. In those seven months there could be no variance in a sequence of months that were 30/29/30/29/30/29/30 days. Adjustments could only occur after those first seven months of an ecclesiastical year. Thus, the people always knew when the silver trumpets were to sounded in advance, until the “last Trumpet” was sounded on the first day of Tishri, known as the “Day of Trumpets.”

b. The 360th Sabbath Cycle is exactly 2520 years from Creation. What an astonishing number! This is what many believe is the exact time period mentioned in Luke 21:24 and Romans 11:25 as the “Times of the Gentiles.” It is at this time that the counting of the Jubilee begins. What an amazing coincidence! See page 165.

c. Jer. 52:31-34.

d. Ezra came to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:8), which answers to the year of 458-57 BCE and a Sabbatical year.

e. Josephus, *Ant.*, 11.8.6 [§343] (Whiston, 307-08).

f. 1 Macc 6:49, 53.

g. Josephus, *Ant.*, 13.8.1 [§234] (Whiston, 351). Note: “Josephus’ dating of Simon’s death during the Shemitah of 177 A.S., which is equivalent to 135/34 B.C.E., offers unambiguous testimony for the calendar of Sabbatical cycles” (Ben Zion Wacholder, “The Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles,” *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 44 [1973]: 165).

h. Josephus, *Ant.*, 14:16:2 [§475] (Whiston, 396). That this year was a Sabbatical year, see Kenneth Atkinson, “Herod the Great, Sosius, and the Siege of Jerusalem (37 B.C.E.) in Psalm of Solomon 17,” *Novum Testamentum* 38:4 (Oct 1966): 312–22.

i. Building projects were typically undertaken when Jewish farmers who were idle due to the land Sabbath could be utilized in a work force during such a year.

j. See Paul R. Finch, “When Was Jesus Born?,” in *Beyond Acts* (CreateSpace.com, 2016), 256-79, wherein the author established the date of Tishri 1 (Sept. 10), 3 BCE for the date of the birth of Jesus. Therefore, technically speaking, the birth of Jesus occurred one year before the Sabbatical year of 3-2 BCE. Maybe this is why some accept the Zuchermann sequence in order to maintain the idea that birth of Jesus would necessarily be in a Sabbatical year.

k. Jesus reads the scroll of Isaiah at 61:1-2 on the “Day of the Sabbaths [Pentecost/Trumpets?]” (Luke 4:17-21) proclaiming the “acceptable year of the Lord.”

l. Mishnah, Sota 7:8.

m. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, 5.18.13.

n. Gal 4:10.

o. Wacholder, “Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles,” 169-71.

p. *Seder Olam*, 30:74a-75a; Tosefta, Ta’anit, 3:9; Yer. Ta’anit, 4.5.68d; B. Ta’anit 29a; Arakhin, 11b.

q. Wacholder, “Calendar of Sabbatical Cycles,” 176-79.

What All this Means

We must come to the realization that the number seven is quite significant in the Biblical narrative. Why? What is it about that number that it shows up so often again and again in significant Biblical dates? We have the seventh day of the week, a seven year cycle, a Jubilee cycle (7 X 7 +1 cycle), the seven annual Holy-days of Leviticus 23, and a seven thousand year cycle. How significant is it that by the chronology established herein that the year 2030 is a year of Jubilee? What other chronology can make that boast? All other chronologies have failed that test.

Why does the Bible put these numbers out there to tease us with such tidbits if we are not supposed to see the overall plan of God within them? It is as if we are pummeled over and over again to see the simple truth of its teaching. It represents nothing less than “Plan of God” doctrine

101. The Apostle Peter finally began to see this great revelation of a seven thousand year plan when he stated:

But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.⁸⁹⁴

The early Church Father Irenaeus hit the nail on the head when he stated:

For in as many days as this world was made, in so many thousand years shall it be concluded ... This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For the day of the Lord is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed; it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at **the six thousandth year**.⁸⁹⁵

Either the Bible is trying to tell us something with its numerology in the overall plan of God, or everything within the Bible is totally meaningless. It is just as simple and significant as that. We live in a world where measured time is consequential in human society and due dates are important. Our mortgages are dependent on it, our paychecks are dependent upon it, our checkout times are dependent upon it, *etc., etc., etc.* Society lives by scheduled time events. Either the world is on a schedule or it is not! If it is, then we are obligated to understand what it is. If it is not, then nothing within the pages of Scripture has any meaning at all!

We can't go on forever uttering "it is not for us to know the times or seasons." Bull crap! That is such drivel! We can't go on saying that setting dates has a one hundred percent failure rate based upon the false interpretations of the past. Look at what the Bible says in response to this dictum:

The word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, what is this proverb you have in the land of Israel: 'The days go by and every vision comes to nothing'? Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: **I am going to put an end to this proverb**, and they will no longer quote it in Israel.' Say to them, 'The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled. For there will be no more false visions or flattering divinations among the people of Israel. But I the Lord will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious people, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign Lord.'"⁸⁹⁶

The time has come for putting away the arrogance of the "false visions or flattering divinations" of the past. Time is marching on. And it marches on with a definite purpose and goal.

"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. ... Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."⁸⁹⁷

When the children of Israel left Egypt on the fifteenth day of Nisan in the year of the Exodus it was 430 years "to the very day" (Exod 12:40) from the promise that God confirmed upon Abraham

⁸⁹⁴ 2 Pet 3:8-9.

⁸⁹⁵ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 5.28.3.

⁸⁹⁶ Ezek 12:22-25.

⁸⁹⁷ Matt 24:36-44.

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at the birth of Isaac. How on earth could such an exacting time measurement be even possible without the mathematical skills and a calendar of such precision? Obviously, there was a calendar in place and that day was recorded in the days of Abraham and remembered every year for over four centuries. Everything happened to an exacting time schedule. But to what end? If there is no time schedule in the plan of God, then everything is meaningless. We might just as well just “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die (1 Cor 15:32).

The entire earth yearns for a divine intervention and now is the time ripe as never before. If not now, when? We may not know the “day” nor the “hour” to which the days will be cut short,⁸⁹⁸ but we can now know the season. And everything points to the fact that we are presently living in the last Sabbatical sequence since the creation of Adam. A new millennial age is about to begin at the Jubilee year beginning in 2030 — *the sixth thousandth year!*

⁸⁹⁸ Matt 24:22.



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